

ماہنامہ دارالماہر

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi

His Life And Contributions

Maulana Muhammad Qamar az-Zaman
Sahib Allahabad

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Translated by:
Maulana Mahomed Mahomedy

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**MAULĀNĀ ABUL HASAN ‘ALĪ
HASANĪ NADWĪ – HIS LIFE AND
CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān
Sāhib Allāhābādī**

**Translated by Maulānā Mahomed
Mahomedy**

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* the Maktabah Dār al-Ma'ārif Allāhābād is conferred with the good fortune of printing and distributing valuable and well-received publications. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, it has already published 39 works, some of which have already gone into their second edition. The second edition of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* volume five with certain additions to it was brought to the public domain not very long ago. Similarly, the Gujarati translation of *Tarbīyyat Aulād Kā Islāmī Nizām* and the Urdu and English editions of *Dars Qur'ān* have also been published.

A new and beneficial work of my honourable father, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib dāmat barakātuhum, which is titled *Nuqūsh Wa Āthār Mufakkir-e-Islam* is presently in your hands. We at Maktabah Dār al-Ma'ārif Allāhābād are overjoyed at the opportunity of being able to present to the readers the writings and contributions of an international personality. May Allāh *ta'ālā* perpetuate his writings and contributions until eternity.

We are grateful to all those who assisted us in whatever way in our programme of publishing. It is through their assistance that this programme is enjoying immense progress. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Allāh willing, *Jāmi' al-Aḥkām* of Ḥadrat Maulānā Shams ad-Dīn Sāhib will be printed soon and presented to the public.

Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Qāmar az-Zamān Qāsmī
Allāhābādī

FOREWORD

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

This insignificant servant, Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī states that when ‘Ārif Billāh Ḥadrat Maulānā Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* departed from this temporary abode on 22 Ramaḍān al-Mubārak 1420 A.H., I was in i’tikāf in the masjid of Dār al-‘Ulūm Kanthāriyah, Bharūch, Gujarat. News about his demise weighed heavily on me and caused me immense grief and sadness.

Before this, my honourable father passed away on 15 Ramaḍān al-Mubārak 1419 A.H. Even on this occasion, I was in i’tikāf at the khānqāh in Kanthāriyah. I was so saddened by the news of Ḥadrat *rahimahullāh* that I could not deliver the public lecture after the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh. Consequently, Ḥadrat Maulānā Abū Bakr Sa’id Tarkesari (presently residing in London) delivered a most consoling and encouraging talk. May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Ḥadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā¹ *rahimahullāh* was like a father-figure to me. It was therefore not surprising for me to experience so much of grief over his demise. At the same time, it was necessary for me to inform the public about Ḥadrat’s academic and practical excellences. Thus, despite my intense grief

¹ Ḥadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh* refers to Ḥadrat Maulānā Abū Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. His mother, used to affectionately address him as ‘Alī Miyā. (translator)

and broken-heartedness, I presented his special qualities with much enthusiasm and zeal. I highlighted his special quality of seeking Allāh *ta'ālā* and concern for the Hereafter. The audience was most impressed and affected. In fact, some 'ulamā' remorsefully said that they were totally unaware of the Maulānā's attributes and excellences. For the next two days I delivered one-hour talks on the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam: "The 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets 'alayhimus salām." A few devoted brothers penned these down, edited what they penned, and these were published in *ash-Shāriq*.¹ The articles were well received. All praise and thanks are due to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

After making a few changes and alterations, this talk has been included in this short biography of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* make it beneficial. Āmīn.

Much has been written about Hadrat Maulānā and much more will be written. Despite this, I tried to write something about Hadrat Maulānā so that I may have the honour of being included among those who spoke in his praise.

Early Contact With Hadrat Maulānā

The first time I met Hadrat Maulānā was in the Waṣīyyullāhī Khānqāh in Fatahpūr Tal Narjā, district Ma'ū when he came to visit Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat

¹ This scholarly periodical is published from Muzaffarpūr, district A'zam Garh under the auspices of Hadrat Maulānā Taqī ad-Dīn Sāhib Nadwī Mazāhirī. By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, it contains many useful articles. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Maulānā makes mention of this in his *Purāne Chirāgh* under the biography of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh*. Subsequently, I had many occasions of meeting him in Allāhābād, Lucknow, Rāi Bareilly and Mumbai. This is solely through the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah is Prescribed

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* was not happy with some of the Arabic literature books which were included in the Dars Nizāmī syllabus. He was concerned about introducing some other books. After consultations, it was decided that Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib's *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah* and other books be taught. These books were ordered and Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* personally began teaching these books to his daughters, while he instructed me to teach Maulwī Nūr al-Hudā, Hāfiz Thanā'ullāh and others. Not long thereafter, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* gave me the responsibility of teaching his daughters as well. Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was very happy when he learnt about it and this resulted in my getting closer to him. Subsequently, *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah*, *Qaṣaṣ an-Nabīyyīn*, *Manthūrāt*, *Mukhtārāt*, etc. were all included in the syllabus of Madrasah Waṣīyyatul 'Ulūm Allāhābād and Madrasah 'Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma'arif Allāhābād. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Visit to Allāhābād

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* came to Allāhābād in 1957 and settled down in the city permanently. Thus, Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī

rahimahullāh visited him here on several occasions. In fact, whenever he came to Allāhābād for any Dīnī or political function, he would stay over at the khānqāh of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh*. On one occasion he came to Allāhābād for the well-known Islāh al-Muslimīn assembly. On this occasion too, he stayed over at the khānqāh of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh*. The latter requested him to speak on Paradise and Hell in the assembly. Hadrat Maulānā replied without hesitation: “Hadrat, I do not have the subject matter for such a talk.” Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* read several verses of the Qur’ān and quoted Ahādīth on the subject of Paradise and Hell. Hadrat Maulānā was most impressed and overjoyed. He then delivered a talk on the subject.

Hadrat Maulānā’s special bond with Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* strengthened so much that Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* wrote in one of his letters to him:

From among all the ‘ulamā’ and scholars who come here frequently, my heart is probably most inclined to you.

After The Demise of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* passed away in 1387 A.H./1967 while he was proceeding for hajj. He passed away while he was on board a ship and was lowered into the sea near the Jeddah harbour. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*, out of his extreme love, wrote a letter to me and said that – Allāh willing – he will come soon to Allāhābād to offer his condolences. However, he could not come although he did write to me a few times. Eventually I wrote to him saying: “It seems that we do not have sincerity

within us, this is why we are being deprived of Hadrat Maulānā's visit." This letter left its mark on Hadrat Maulānā and he wrote back: "I will most certainly come." Subsequently, he came to Allāhābād, sat in Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat's place of assembly and delivered a talk in which he stressed the need to keep the khānqāh inhabited and encouraged us to acquire the fundamental treasure of the inner self. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

My Visit to Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, Takiyah, Rāi Bareilly

Subsequent to this, my bond with Hadrat Maulānā strengthened. I made a firm resolution to go to Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh and eventually went there and met Hadrat Maulānā. He was overjoyed, received me with intense affection and kindness, and gave me a beautiful Arab scarf as a gift. My closeness to him increased, and he too showered me with even more kindness to the extent that he would invite me to certain functions.

Maulānā Hamzah Sāhib who was the son of Hadrat Sayyid Maulānā Muḥammad Thānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* got married to the daughter of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābī' Sāhib, the present rector of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* invited me to this wedding and I attended. We had a meal which was presented by Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābī' Sāhib. I then got ready to depart for Allāhābād and went to meet Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. He said to me: "The walimah is scheduled for tomorrow. Stay over and join the walimah or else Muḥammad Thānī might feel offended." I stayed over, joined the

walimah the next day and returned to Allāhābād. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

My Visit on The 27th of Ramaḍān

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* for His kindness. Generally I used to go to Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh on the 27th night of Ramaḍān. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* used to make arrangements for iftār and meals. He would then speak on the virtues of this night and on reading the following du'ā':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تَحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ

O Allāh! You are most pardoning. You love to pardon, so pardon me.

In the course of his talk he spoke about Hadrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh* and said with much emotion: “Hadrat Sayyid Sāhib left behind his wealth here and was killed in Bālākaut.” Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said this with so much of feeling that it had an effect on me, and I experienced a strange and unique feeling in my heart.

I began an i'tikāf and khānqāh programme in Kanthāriyah, Bharūch, Gujarat in 1412 A.H. Since that time, I had to stop going to Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh on the 27th night and was thus deprived of this wonderful opportunity. Nevertheless, I continued visiting Hadrat Maulānā in the course of the year, and I would certainly write a letter requesting him to remember me in his du'ā's in the month of Ramaḍān. Even the Ramaḍān in which he departed from this world, I had written a letter to him. Hadrat Maulānā's reply to this letter is quoted further on in this book. I consider it an honour to have received this letter from him.

Hadrat's Love And Consideration

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* would send me invitations to attend the Rābiṭah al-Adab al-‘Arabī which I used to attend occasionally. I attended on one such occasion and presented myself before him. He said: “I am so happy that you came. I was alone and now I have you as company.” He made many other statements which demonstrated not only his love and consideration for me, but his good thoughts about me.

Hadrat Maulānā came to Allāhābād to initiate the Payām-e-Insāniyyat movement. In a special assembly of a certain person’s house, he said: “I decided to initiate this movement in Allāhābād because most movements were initiated in this city but were completed in Dakkan. The other reason is that you people are here.” Mukarram Dr. Hāfiz Salāh ad-Dīn Sāhib and I were present at the time.

Glory to Allāh! Just look at his love, consideration and noble thoughts! May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

I went to visit Hadrat Maulānā on one occasion and noticed that he was grieved by certain unfavourable situations. When I returned to Allāhābād, I wrote a letter to him in which I quoted the following couplet:

They say that when the station of
patience is reached, then a rock turns
into a diamond. Yes, it certainly does,
(but not just like that); the blood of the
liver has to be shed for it.

Hadrat Maulānā was overjoyed when he read it and replied: “Where did you get this couplet from?” I wrote back: “It is quoted in the *Tafhīmāt Ilāhiyyah* of

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* and I quoted it from there.”

Included in his acts of kindness was that whenever I went to visit him, he would make it a point of giving me money for the return journey. On one of those occasions, he did not give me anything. After a few days, I received a letter from him in which he wrote: “Pardon me for not giving you anything for the journey because I myself did not have anything at the time.”

Absolute Humility

I went for hajj in 1398 A.H./1978. While I was in Madīnah Munawwarah I sent a pair of leather socks for Hadrat Maulānā via Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Tāhir Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the father of Maulānā Sayyid Salmān Sāhib Nadwī. I did not even think about this gift which I sent. When I met Hadrat Maulānā after several months, he said to me: “You sent that pair of leather socks from Madīnah Munawwarah at a most opportune time because I had no socks to wear at that time.”

On one occasion Hadrat Maulānā came to Allāhābād for a certain lecture. He wanted to go to bed early, but the place from which his meal was to be sent hadn’t arrived as yet. He was to stay at Madrasah ‘Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma‘ārif. When it became too late, he expressed his wish to eat. I proceeded immediately to my house, and brought some fried eggs and fresh hot rotīs. Hadrat Maulānā had the meal happily and consoled me by saying: “I really enjoy eating this.”

Glory to Allāh! Look at his comforting and reassuring words. It displays not only the nobility of his self but

his noble Sayyid lineage. May Allāh *ta'ālā* endow us with these beautiful qualities. Āmīn.

On one occasion, I took my sons, Maqbūl Aḥmad, Sa'īd Aḥmad, 'Azīz Aḥmad and Maḥbūb Aḥmad to meet Ḥaḍrat Maulānā. He asked: "What are they studying?" I replied: "They are studying Arabic." He asked in surprise: "Are they all studying Arabic?!" He then expressed his approval. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, these four sons have qualified as 'ulamā'. In addition to them, their younger siblings, Muḥammad 'Abdullāh and Muḥammad 'Ubaydullāh have also qualified as 'ulamā'. Some time before his demise, I said to Ḥaḍrat Maulānā: "I have six sons, three are Qāsimīs¹ and three are Nadwīs.²" Ḥaḍrat Maulānā replied happily: "You made a very good distribution."

Maulwī Sa'īd Aḥmad Takes Admission in Nadwah

When my son, Sa'īd Aḥmad, completed the Daurah Ḥaḍīth at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, I admitted him in Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' to study Arabic literature. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā was very happy when I did this and it increased our bond. Consequently, because of Sa'īd Aḥmad studying there, I had several occasions of going to Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. In this way, I used to get the honour of meeting Ḥaḍrat Maulānā and attending his assemblies. Sa'īd Aḥmad eventually completed the Arabic literature course after two years. During this period, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā

¹ A Qāsimī is an 'ālim who qualified at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband. (translator)

² A Nadwī is an 'ālim who qualified at Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow. (translator)

paid special attention to him and used to say to me that he has lived up to his name. Furthermore, due to my son's affiliation with Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh,¹ Hadrat Maulānā made special arrangements for Sa'īd Aḥmad's admission at the Islamic University in Madīnah Munawwarah. He got admitted in the College of Da'wah at that university, studied there for four years and graduated. Subsequent to that, Sa'īd Aḥmad was appointed by the Saudi government as a lecturer in Zambia, Malawi and other African countries. He was then sent to Riyadh for some time, and then to Bahrain. By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he is now a permanent resident of Bahrain. All this is through the love, affection and prayers of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh and Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī raḥimahullāh. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

A Blessed Dream

I saw a dream in which Hadrat Maulānā raḥimahullāh was proceeding to some place and I was with him. He then embraced me to his chest and said: "Do not worry, your children are my children." This dream was obviously most consoling for my distressed condition.² All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

¹ Hadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib [the author] was first married to the daughter of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh. His son, Sa'īd Aḥmad, was thus the grandson of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh. (translator)

² I would not have related this dream, but Hadrat Shāh Sāhib raḥimahullāh eventually related his dream and that is

Hadrat Maulānā was overjoyed when I related this dream to him. I also said to him that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said to Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*: “Your children are my children.” This was obviously a magnificent glad tiding for Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. In the same way, a glittering lamp¹ from the lineage of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was made to say this for my consolation. When I said this to Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*, he expressed his joy and happiness.

In The Service of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Partābgarhī

After the demise of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* began spending time in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partabgarhī *rahimahullāh*. On most of these occasions, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* used to stay at Madrasah Bayt al-Ma‘ārif, Bakhshī Bāzār, Allāhābād. At times, several senior ‘ulamā’ and Sufī masters such as Hadrat Maulānā Ḥabīb ar-Raḥmān Sāhib A‘zamī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Ḥaq Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Ḥakīm Muḥammad Akhtar Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and others would gather at the same time. This would result in a Dīnī and imān-filled environment. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* cause more and more personalities of spiritual rank to be

how we came to know of it. Based on this principle, I got the courage to relate it and pen it down. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* pardon me and protect me against conceit and other evils. Āmīn.

¹ Reference is made to Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* who is from the progeny of Hadrat Ḥasan *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*.

born in our times so that the message of Allāh's love and recognition may spread far and wide. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

On one occasion when Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was staying over in Madrasah Bayt al-Ma'ārif, he said to Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*: “Hadrat! You must consider Nadwah to be [your house] just like Bayt al-Ma'ārif.” This demonstrated Hadrat Maulānā's extreme humbleness and humility – qualities which are most loved by Allāh *ta'ālā*. Subsequently, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* went to Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' for a few days and conducted his assemblies there. The people were most impressed.

Affinity With Hadrat Maulānā's Written Works

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, I had an affinity with Hadrat Maulānā's written works from the beginning. He would very often send me his new works, and I too used to purchase them periodically. I would then present extracts from them in my assemblies and lectures. And now I even quote portions in my own writings. Many quotations from *Tārīkh Da'wat Wa 'Azīmat* are included in *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*.

In fact, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* embellished volumes two and five of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* with his valuable introduction, while Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib *mudda zilluhu* wrote an introduction to volume six.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, short biographies of Hadrat Maulānā's father, mother, sister and several other family members are included in *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* expressed his

happiness on this and made mention of it in his introduction to volume five of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Mahbūb Aḥmad And Muḥammad 'Ubaydullāh Take Admission

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, Maulwī Sa'īd Aḥmad graduated from Nadwatul 'Ulamā' in 1395 A.H. In Shawwāl of the same year, Nadwatul 'Ulamā' celebrated its 75th anniversary. One year later, I admitted my other son, Mahbūb Aḥmad, at Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. He graduated in 1983. Thereafter, Muḥammad 'Ubaydullāh was admitted at Nadwah in Shawwāl 1415 A.H./1995 and he completed his studies in 1421 A.H./2001.

When I went to visit Ḥadrat Maulānā some days before his demise, he said to me with much happiness: "I just received a phone call from Maulwī Sa'īd asking me about my wellbeing." He added: "Sa'īd has kept up to his name." Ḥadrat Maulānā then requested me to send certain books to him which he must then convey to the 'ulamā' there. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, I sent those books.

Mahbūb Aḥmad Pledges Bay'at

In the same assembly, I mentioned bay'at in favour of Mahbūb Aḥmad, and Ḥadrat accepted gladly. It is most certainly a good fortune for my son. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless him in it and accept it from him. May Allāh *ta'ālā* endow him with the spirituality and internal focus of the elders of all the Sufi families, and honour him with affinity with Him. Āmīn.

I had many opportunities of attending Ḥadrat Maulānā's talks and assemblies. Thus, I recall many of his statements and teachings. I tried to preserve

some of them by quoting them further on in this book.

Similarly, I have been corresponding with him for some time, and many of his letters are preserved by myself. Some of them will be quoted later on. Hadrat Maulānā's love and affection will clearly be gauged from those letters.

Subsequent to the demise of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib Nadwī, his brothers and his family members maintain a strong and loving relationship with me. I consider this an honour for myself. Based on this bond, Hadrat Maulānā's nephew, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh* wrote the introduction to this book. He is a trustworthy repository of Hadrat Maulānā's external and spiritual lineages. In other words, just as he is fulfilling the role of rector of Nadwatul 'Ulamā' as a representative of Hadrat Maulānā, he is – by the will of Allāh *ta'ālā* – a khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā in the field of taṣawwuf and is continuing his good work most excellently.

It is also due to the strong bond of these personalities that they included me as a member of the Shūrah (Consultative Assembly) of an august centre like Nadwatul 'Ulamā' despite my unworthiness.

In this biography I tried to quote aspects from several of Hadrat Maulānā's written works and articles so that his expertise in the fields of rectitude, rectification, teaching and educating, propagation and Sufism may become clear to the reader. Many sections are quoted from *Arkān-e-Arba'ah* so that the reader may benefit from these wisdom-filled and

enlightening themes. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable me to realize this objective and may He enable every Muslim to benefit. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable all who are affiliated to Hadrat Maulānā to pay attention to his academic, mental and spiritual qualities and excellences, and endow us with them. Āmīn.

I consider it essential to express my gratitude to those who assisted me. For example, Maulānā Muftī Zayn al-Islam Sāhib, Maulānā Maqṣūd Aḥmad Sāhib and Maulānā Fīroze 'Ālam Sāhib (lecturers at Madrasah 'Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma'ārif, Allāhābād) who made considerable efforts in the layout and proofreading. Also Maulānā Faḍl Maḥmūd who left no stone unturned in the arrangement of chapters, and did the typesetting most beautifully. Maulānā Hāfiz 'Ubaydullāh Nadwī also helped in this regard. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward all of them with the best of rewards.

It is to my good fortune that the following personalities embellished this book by writing their impressions about it: Hadrat Maulānā 'Abdullāh Sāhib Kāpaurī (presently residing in Canada), Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Aḥsan Sāhib Fataḥpūrī (founder and rector of Madrasah Tajwīd al-Furqān, Fataḥpūr) and Maulānā Muḥammad Ayyūb Sāhib Surtī (presently residing in Britain). May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

The book will first commence with the life of Hadrat Maulānā – his birth, family, education, and so on. *Sawānīḥ Mufakkir-e-Islam* which is written by Maulānā Sayyid Bilāl 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥasanī Sāhib is used as the source for these details because there can be no book more reliable than it. I make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to inspire Maulānā Sayyid Bilāl 'Abd al-

Hayy Hasanī Sāhib to write more academic books of this nature. May Allāh *ta'ālā* also reward all other personalities whose books I consulted and quoted in this book.¹ May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

After consulting my associates and in line with the following couplet of a senior personality, I decided to name this book *Nuqūsh Wa Āthār Mufakkir-e-Islam*. The couplet reads as follows:

تلك آثارنا تدلّ علينا – فانظروا بعدنا إلى الآثار

These are our contributions which point to us. So look at our contributions after we depart.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* make this book true to its title, may He accept my efforts, and may He send down His special mercy when this book is read, heard and taught. After all, a Hadīth states:

عند ذكر الصالحين تنزل الرحمة

Mercy descends when the righteous are remembered.

Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* and He guides to the straight path.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī, *may Allāh pardon him*

13 Jumādā ath-Thānīyah 1425 A.H./1 August 2004.

¹ Maulānā 'Abdullāh 'Abbās Sāhib Nadwī, Maulānā Muftī Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib, Maulānā Mamshād 'Alī Sāhib Qāsimī and Dr. Mas'ūd al-Hasan Sāhib 'Uthmānī.

INTRODUCTION

**Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Ḥasanī
Nadwī Sāhib**

Rector of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow
and Khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan
'Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين وعلى آله
وصحبه أجمعين، ومن تبعهم بإحسان ودعا بدعوتهم إلى يوم الدين، وبعد!

The western regions of U.P. which include Rāi Bareilly to Allāhābād and A'zam Garh have enjoyed the speciality of pious personalities being given divine inspiration to devote their lives in the quest of Allāh's pleasure, and creating an inclination towards true beliefs and obedience to Allāh *ta'ālā* in the hearts of the masses. In the recent past, the name of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib A'zamī and then Allāhābādī (who is from among the most senior khulafā' of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh) stands out. His blessings and contributions spread to a great extent in this region, and the desire to live a life of spirituality was demonstrated in the lives of many people.

Also during the era of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh was the great personality, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Phulpūrī (who at one and the same time was an Uways of the era and a khalīfah of Hadrat Shāh Faḍl ar-Raḥmān Ganjmurādābādī rahimahullāh). He also carried out the work of propagation and instruction in this region through silent and enduring journeys. He spent a long period of time in

training and instructing people, and conveyed his blessings to them. After the demise of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he had to put in more work in this direction. The blessings of these two personalities resulted in their deputies carrying out the responsibilities of training and instruction in several places.

From among these personalities is Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib A'zamī and then Allāhābādī. In addition to being a khalifah of Hadrat Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he had the honour of being his son-in-law as well. After the demise of Hadrat Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he established a special bond with Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Phulpūrī *rahimahullāh* and received khilāfat from him. He is carrying out the responsibilities of training and instruction, and his efforts are not confined to western U.P. Rather they extend to Gujarat, Africa, Europe, Canada and other places. A unique feature about him is that he has authored many works on the subject of rectification and instruction, and he continues writing to this day. Another noteworthy aspect of his life is that in addition to his relationship with the previously mentioned personalities, he maintains close ties with other senior personalities. He considers it equally important to write their biographies as he does of the personalities of his own circle. Examples of this can be found in his writings on the themes of rectification and instruction.

The book under review is a great testimony in this regard. He devoted an entire book comprising of admonitory lessons and aspects from the life of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī

rahimahullāh. He includes in it the effects which he perceived in the course of his meetings with Hadrat Maulānā and the admonitory lessons which he learnt during these meetings. Together with this, he quotes extracts from Hadrat Maulānā's writings on the subjects of propagation, instruction, and exposition of Islam. In this way, he conveyed to others the call of his heart which said that he must have a share in introducing to others Hadrat Maulānā's services to the Dīn and his contributions in the field of rectification and instruction.

Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib – may Allāh *ta'ālā* give him a long life – established a bond with Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* from the time when the latter used to go to meet Hadrat Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* also paid particular attention to Hadrat Maulānā and they used to correspond with each other. Furthermore, there was a close bond between Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Phulphūrī *rahimahullāh*. In addition to this, Hadrat Shāh Diyā' an-Nabī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the maternal grandfather of Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan *rahimahullāh*, and another senior of this family, Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Amīn Sāhib Naṣīrābādī *rahimahullāh*, had a major spiritual influence over this entire region. Memories of this remain to this day. The old people of Rāi Bareilly going up to Jaunpūr and A'zam Garh have fond memories of these seniors. Consequently, due to their bond with Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*, these old people perceive a close association with Hadrat Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib

rahimahullāh, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and others. The effect of this bond and association most probably left its mark on Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib.

Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* adopted the ways of the seniors of his family, expanded the work of rectification and instruction, and spread it further through his speeches and writings. A special feature of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was to have a close bond with senior personalities of his time and to benefit from them. He took their blessings and benefited from their kindness and du‘ā’s. Another special feature of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was that he adopted various qualities in his practical life for the service of Dīn and for the rectification and training of his disciples. Consequently, based on the educational, cultural, rectificational, academic and national needs of the Muslim community, he rendered practical and rectificational services through his speeches and writings. This is why various sections of the Muslim community look up to him with respect and esteem.

Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib is from among the noteworthy people who valued Hadrat Maulānā greatly. An excellent example of his love and affiliation with Hadrat Maulānā is that he prepared this book on the life of Hadrat Maulānā. In addition to having had a close relationship with Hadrat Maulānā, Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān has a very warm and cordial relationship with Hadrat Maulānā’s family members and relatives. The writer of these lines is included among them. Despite my unworthiness, the Maulānā requested me to write the introduction to this book. As regards the excellent contents of this book and

the unique writing capabilities of its author, these will – inshā Allāh – be gauged by the reader in the course of reading this book.

Muḥammad Rābi' Ḥasanī Nadwī
Dār 'Arafāt, Dā'irah Ḥadrat Shāh 'Alamullāh
Takiyah Kalān, Rāi Bareilly
28 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1425 A.H.

IMPRESSIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Sāhib Kāpaurī

Former principal of Dār al-‘Ulūm Falāḥ-e-Dārayn

A Divine Gift to The Ummah

The personality of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Hasanī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was a divine gift to the Muslim ummah from Allāh *ta’ālā*. Allāh *ta’ālā* combined unique qualities in him which are rarely seen in very few people. After his demise, articles, seminars, special editions of newspapers and periodicals, etc. were written and conducted about him in India, Pakistan, the Arab world, the U.K. and America. So much was written on his life and services that probably not a single aspect of his life was left out.

Despite this, the associates of Hadrat Maulānā still shed light on this phenomenal personality and his great works in various ways and through numerous means.

Shaykh-e-Tarīqat Has a Special Bond With Hadrat Maulānā

Shaykh-e-Tarīqat Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī *mudda zilluhu* had a special bond and relationship with Hadrat Maulānā. This is why he decided to write on Hadrat Maulānā in the light of his relationship with him. Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib with a unique ability to collate and present the biographies and statements of the pious personalities in a simple language. I was therefore overjoyed when I heard that he is compiling a book on Hadrat Maulānā.

Out of his kindness and affection, he requested my insignificant self to write my impressions about Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh*.

It is a most difficult task for an incapable student like myself to write something about a great personality like Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. At the same time, it is necessary for me to carry out the instructions of my seniors. I take the opportunity of presenting a few words so that I may be included in the reward.

My Bond in Abstentia With Hadrat Maulānā

It was most probably around the year 1951 when I was in the fifth year of my study when I came to know of Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* through some of his articles in *al-Furqān*. I also had the opportunity of reading some of his booklets in the Urdu language. Hadrat Maulānā’s style of writing immediately attracts one and all. This is why I began searching for his articles one after the other. In this way, I developed a bond with Hadrat Maulānā from an early stage of my life. I developed an intense desire to meet him, but this was not realized during my student days.

My First Meeting in 1959

I was in Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband in 1959 with the sons of Maulānā Ismā‘īl Gārdī *rahimahullāh*. One of my friends informed me that Hadrat Shāh ‘Abd al-Qādir Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* is presently at Bhutt House in Sahāranpūr, and that in addition to many of his attendants, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Miyā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* from Lucknow is also residing with him.

I was overjoyed when I heard about the arrival of these two great personalities in Sahāranpūr, and I now had an opportunity of fulfilling my wish which had been lurking in my heart for so long. I took the evening train to Sahāranpūr, proceeded to the place where Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* was residing, and had the honour of meeting these great seniors.

This was my first meeting with Hadrat Maulānā. From this very first meeting, I was intensely impressed by his simplicity and love-filled words. Some ‘ulamā’ from Pakistan had also come to meet Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh*, and they were engaged in certain important discussions with Hadrat *rahimahullāh*. This is why I did not get a chance of having a long conversation with Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Nonetheless, my heart was overjoyed by the honour of beholding him.

My Second Meeting

Subsequently, during that same stay in Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband, a few friends and I decided to start publishing a periodical in the Arabic language. During those days, Shaykh Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Maḥmūd Tanṭāwī was sent by Azhar University as a lecturer to Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. When we consulted him in this regard, he encouraged us and we resolved to publish a periodical titled *al-Yaqzāh*. Maulānā ‘Amīd az-Zamān Kīrānwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was appointed as its editor and I together with a few friends began practising to write articles.

We had published just two issues when we saw posters announcing the arrival of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* right at the doorstep of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband, i.e. at Fayḍ-e-

‘Ām College, Meerut. We considered this to be a great opportunity. I accompanied Maulānā ‘Amīd az-Zamān Kīrānwī Sāhib and we went and presented ourselves before Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. We spoke to him about the publication of *al-Yaqzah* and presented the two issues to him. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* encouraged us immensely and advised us to study the academic periodicals of the Arab world and the books of Arab litterateurs.

After the arrival of Egyptian lecturers – Shaykh ‘Abd al-Mun‘im *rahimahullāh* and Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Āl *rahimahullāh* – at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband, several books of Egyptian litterateurs had come to the Dār al-‘Ulūm library. The writings of Tā Hā Husayn, Mustafā Sādiq ar-Rāfi‘ī, Mustafā Manfalūtī, Maḥmūd ‘Abbās ‘Aqqād and Aḥmad Amīn were now available to us. I had the opportunity of reading a few but could not understand them thoroughly. When I mentioned this to Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*, he advised me to continue studying them; this will result in becoming accustomed to their respective styles of writing gradually and understanding their texts. He added: “I am studying the books of Arab writers for many years and I also write in Arabic. Despite this, there are words which I do not understand but work them out from the context. Thus, you must not give up hope and do not abstain from reading them.”

All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, we benefited tremendously from Hadrat’s words of advice. Also acting on his advice, I obtained the following books and began studying them:

‘Alā *Hāmish as-Sīrah* and *al-Ayyām* of Tā Hā Husayn.

Zu‘amā’ al-Is̥lāh and *Ilā Wālidī* of Aḥmad Amīn.

‘Abarāt and *Nazarāt* of Manfalūtī.

Innī Rāḥilah of as-Sibā’ī and a few other books.

A Statement of Shaykh Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Waḥḥāb Tanṭāwī

We used to go to Shaykh Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Waḥḥāb Tanṭāwī *rahimahullāh* daily. Whenever we used to mention the name of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan Nadwī *rahimahullāh* before him, he used to speak highly about Ḥaḍrat Maulānā’s expertise in the Arabic language. He used to say: “Sayyid Abul Ḥasan is in the first row with the litterateurs of Egypt and Syria.” He used to say: “We are most impressed by the Arabic writings of an Indian scholar.” Whenever any new article or book of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* used to be published, we used to present a copy to the Shaykh who would then read it with much enthusiasm and love. The Shaykh used to be highly impressed by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā’s flowing style and sincerity-filled writing.

The Shaykh used to say with reference to Ḥaḍrat Maulānā’s book, *Mādhā Khasara al-‘Ālam bi Inḥitāt al-Muslimīn*: “No contemporary scholar was inspired to write on history in the manner presented by Shaykh Abul Ḥasan. It is most certainly a revolutionary book which is written in a most impressive and captivating style.”

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā’s Popularity in The Arab World

Shaykh Maḥmūd’s statement was absolutely correct. I went to Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia with the Tablighī Jamā‘at. Whenever we met the ‘ulamā’ of Baghdad, Falūjah, Ummān and other cities, they

would immediately speak about Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh* and his book, *Mādhā Khasara al-‘Ālam bi Inḥitāt al-Muslimīn*. From this I gauged that this book really impressed the learned people of the Arab world. They would ask us about Hadrat Maulānā’s other written works and express their desire to read them.

During our stay in Baghdad, we had the opportunity of attending the weekly assembly of the senior ‘ulamā’ of the city. This weekly assembly was known as *Rābiṭah ‘Ulamā’ Baghdad*. Even there, the first question they would ask was about Hadrat Maulānā’s health, wellbeing, and his new books. From this, I gauged that Hadrat Maulānā’s popularity and appreciation of his academic efforts are much more outside India than within India. Many regions of India are not as aware of Hadrat Maulānā’s services as the Arabs are.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

This is the grace of Allāh ta‘ālā which He confers on whomever He wills.

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh* rendered services in several fields, viz. teaching, writing, da‘wat and tablīgh, rectification of society, rectification of literature and culture, training of teachers, establishment of makātīb, providing correct guidance to the youth of the Islamic world, leadership of the Muslim Personal Law Board, expressing clear and frank views on issues facing the Islamic nation, criticism of false thoughts and views in a balanced and academic manner, frank appraisal of issues facing the Arab world, and so on. There are so many fields in which he toiled

throughout his life. Towards the latter part of his life he initiated the movement of *Payām-e-Insānīyyat* (message to mankind) in an effort to put an end to religious fanaticism and sectarianism within the country, and endeavoured to rekindle human sentiments. Subsequently, these services were not confined to India. Rather, they spread through Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Afghanistan and Europe.

Just before the Ramadān of last year, I travelled to Spain. While there, I came across a book titled *al-Islam fī Asbāniyā* (Islam in Spain) written by a Moroccan scholar. He writes about an Islamic awakening in Spain, its masājid and Islamic centres. While writing about the Islamic organizations of Cordova, Granada, Ashbīliyah and other Spanish cities; he states that an Indian scholar by the name of Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* played a major role in this Islamic awakening. He states further that during his [Maulānā Abul Ḥasan’s] trip to Spain, he encouraged the Muslim youth to join forces in establishing Islamic centres, performing *ṣalāh* with congregation, and to spend time in inviting towards Allāh *ta’ālā*. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, this produced good results.

After listening to some of Ḥadrat Maulānā’s lectures it becomes absolutely clear that Allāh *ta’ālā* had blessed him with imānī foresight. Before the military revolution in Burma, Ḥadrat Maulānā delivered a heart-rending lecture in the Burmese city of Rangoon. He drew the attention of the Muslims there towards certain dangers which were realized within a few years. It was as though Ḥadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was looking at those dangers right before his eyes and describing them to those people.

There are several incidents of this nature which testify to Hadrat Maulānā's īmānī foresight and illuminated heart.

Dr. Farhān Nizāmī's Observation

During one of my visits to Britain, I went to Oxford where I met Dr. Farhān Nizāmī Sāhib. He related to me that he had the opportunity of accompanying Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* to many places in Britain and listening to his lectures. When Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* delivered talks to general Muslims and centres of da'wat, he emphasized on them to give up fanaticism, to make use of the concessions provided by the Dīn, and to preserve and uphold the concept of tauhīd. When he delivered talks to the educated class, he encouraged them to adhere firmly on Dīn. Dr. Farhān made special mention of the difference in Hadrat Maulānā's approach when addressing these two groups of Muslims.

Pieces of Advice For Madrasah Administrators

Based on his lengthy experiences in the field of education and propagation, Hadrat Maulānā used to provide concise and comprehensive counsel on different occasions. For example, when he visited Dār al-'Ulūm Falāh-e-Dārayn, he said with regard to the appointment of teachers: "You must look for two qualities in a teacher, viz. he must have sincerity and speciality (*ikhlas* and *ikhtisās*). If there is a deficiency in either of the two, he will not benefit the organization." After pondering over this, one realizes that if a teacher does not have the capability of teaching a subject, his religiosity and simplicity alone cannot come to his aid. And if he is very proficient in his knowledge and is a specialist in that

field, but does not possess sincerity and devotion, then the students cannot benefit from him. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā laid down an excellent criterion in just two words. He would also back up his statement from the following words of Hadrat Yūsuf *'alayhis salām*:

أَنَا حَفِیْظٌ عَلِیْمٌ

*I am fully observant, possessing knowledge.*¹

Valuable Advice to Students

To the students of the madāris, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* would always say: A book cannot be read merely on the surface. Rather, you must study an entire book in such a way as though you have licked every bit of it.

He used to say: I read *Fajr al-Islam*, *Duhā al-Islam* and *Zuhr al-Islam* of Aḥmad Amīn so many times that I can recall entire pages from them. Nowadays a superficial reading of books has become the norm. Consequently, those who read in this manner cannot benefit totally from what is read.

His Absolute Simplicity Despite His Lofty Status

Despite his lofty status in the academic and practical fields, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was intensely simple and affable, and on a very high pedestal of asceticism and abstinence. His biographers have related several astounding incidents which portray his disinterest in this world.

¹ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 55.

Hadrat Maulānā was invited to Syria by the University of Damascus. The ‘ulamā’ of the university were astonished when Hadrat Maulānā refused to stay in one of the elite hotels of the city and instead lived in a room which was attached to a masjid. Whenever he used to attend the Muslim World League conferences in Makkah Mukarramah or assembly of Madīnah University, then instead of staying in five-star hotels, he would either stay over at Madrasah Saulatiyah or at the house of an associate.

An Arab Scholar’s Statement

An Arab scholar made a beautiful statement in reference to Hadrat Maulānā’s above-mentioned practice:

إن الدعوة إلى الله تعالى تفتقر إلى اعدادٍ روجي وخلوة مع الله تعالى حتى يكون الكلام منبعثاً من الروح والقلب، ليحل في الروح والقلب. وهذا ما حدث وشعر به كل من استمع إلى محاضراته التي ألقاها.

Inviting towards Allāh ta’ālā requires purity of the soul and solitude with Allāh ta’ālā so that whatever speech emanates from a person would emanate from the depths of the heart and soul. This is so that it will have an effect on the hearts and souls of others. Whoever heard his [Hadrat Maulānā’s] speeches most certainly perceived this.

Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh delivered a heart-rending talk to the lecturers and students of Madīnah University. Those who were present relate that there was probably not a single person who did not shed tears. The fact of the matter is that a speech which emanates from the heart has an effect on the hearts of others.

اللَّهُمَّ امطر عليه شآبيب رحمتك ورضوانك، وأدخله في جنتك جنة الخلد، وارفع
درجته في أعلى العليين برحمتك وفضلك يا أرحم الراحمين.

Was salām

‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī, *may Allāh pardon him.*

Safar al-Muzaffar 1425 A.H.

1 April 2004

PRELUDE

Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Aḥsan Sāhib

Founder and Rector of Madrasah Tajwīd al-Furqān,
district Fataḥpūr

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

I think that Mufakkir-e-Islam Hadrat Sayyid Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was a personality whom Allāh *ta'ālā* – through His absolute wisdom - selected for this tribulation-filled era. Allāh *ta'ālā* favoured this world with many personalities in the past. When we used to hear their names, we used to think that they were stories of the past peoples, and that the present era is not worthy of such lofty individuals. However, a great international figure like Shaykh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* put a complete end to such thoughts, and it is proven from this that Allāh *ta'ālā* has not yet willed to deprive this world of great personalities.

I had the opportunity of observing Shaykh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* from close quarters, listening to him and reading his works. His international services to the ummat of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the high position which he held in the Arab and non-Arab worlds, his world-renowned books, his insightful and pain-filled speeches, leadership of an esteemed organization like the Muslim Personal Law Board, propagational journeys, rector-ship of an international centre like Nadwatul 'Ulamā', and various other services are the hallmarks of his life. People have written profusely on the above-mentioned aspects of his blessed life and will

continue writing on him. The book before you is a link in the same chain regarding which we can say that a great personality has written about the life of another great personality.

It is an undeniable fact that if you want to understand the pain of the heart, you have to be a man of the heart. In order to fully understand the achievements of a great personality, a biographer has to have a deep understanding and a fastidious temperament, he must be well read, and he must have the ability to make correct decisions. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib with all these qualities. The letters which Hadrat Shaykh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* wrote to him – some of which are included in this book – are testimonies to this.

Shaykh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* rendered phenomenal services for over half a century and wrote thousands of pages of facts and realities. Selecting extracts from them and including them in this book was an important issue. How successful was Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib in this regard – the book itself is a testimony to it. Those glittering statements [of Shaykh Nadwī *rahimahullāh*] which were known to Hadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib alone have been dutifully conveyed to the Muslim ummat via this book. In so doing, he has rendered a great service to us and conferred a valuable treasure to the ummat. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him abundantly on behalf of the entire ummat.

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib's first speech of condolence is also included in the book. On reading it, it revived the manner of

speech of Hakīm al-Islam Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He spoke about different aspects of his life, and presented the audience with a valuable treasure of facts and priceless words of advice. By including it in this book, he did not deprive us of this treasure. Only he could have presented such a pain-filled speech over this tragic event [Shaykh Nadwī's demise].

I cannot express all my impressions about this entire book, so I confined myself to these few words.

Muḥammad Aḥsan Qāsimī
Madrasah Tajwīd al-Furqān
Civil Line, district Fataḥpūr
23 Muḥarram 1425 A.H.

IMPRESSIONS

Maulānā Muḥammad Ayyūb Sāhib Surtī

Khalīfah of Ḥadrat Maulānā Shāh Abrār al-Ḥaq
Sāhib *rahimahullāh*

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Ḥadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ḥasanī an-Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was a great gift and grand present of Allāh *ta'ālā* to the ummat of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* which is received on rare occasions. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed his tongue and pen with equal expertise which he used throughout his life for the defence of Islam and providing the ummat with correct leadership without fear of any criticism. It is a matter of extreme pride and honour for an Indian that he was blessed with extraordinary power over the Arabic language – more than what he had over the Urdu language. He most certainly rendered sterling services for about 60 years in the fields of teaching, writing, da'wat and tabligh, rectification and instruction, and lecturing and admonishing.

His first written work which he wrote in the early stages of his life is *Sīrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd* in two volumes. The seniors of that time considered this book to be a harbinger of his loft rank. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with excellent qualities and attributes which are rarely found collectively in a person. A poet rightly said:

وليس على الله بمستنكر – أن يجمع العالم في واحد

It is not far-fetched for Allāh to combine the universe in a single person.

While Hadrāt Maulānā is a Hasanī and Husaynī in lineage, he is the pride of the creation as regards his rank, knowledge and practical life. Based on his Allāh-bestowed character and attributes, he was popular and beloved by all types of people. I believe that the qualities of balance, moderation and comprehensiveness were filled to the core in him; and that his words were a conglomeration of wisdom and sound admonition. This is why he could go to people of every rank and every background, and still present Dīn with full wisdom without any flattery.

During my stay in Britain, I had the opportunity of attending several talks and assemblies of Hadrāt Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. On one of these occasions, he accepted my invitation to Majlis Da'wat al-Haq in Leicester. He performed the 'aṣr ṣalāh and conducted a small assembly after the ṣalāh. Friends from the surrounding areas attended.

All thanks are due to Allāh *ta'ālā* for His favour of enabling me to spend the month of Ramaḍān in Allāhābād in the company of Hadrāt Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh*. I was staying at Madrasah Bayt al-Ma'ārif with Hadrāt Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib during this period. I had planned to go to Hardoi on my return. Hadrāt Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib said to me that he needs to go to Rāi Bareilly, so I joined him. This was the first time I accompanied Hadrāt Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar Sāhib to Rāi Bareilly, and the first time I spent time with Hadrāt Maulānā ['Alī Miyā Sāhib] *rahimahullāh* in his khānqāh in Takiyah. I was

received as his guest and got the opportunity of benefiting from his spirituality.

I believe that an excellent example of Hadrat Maulānā's comprehensiveness is his collection of books and articles written by him. This collection is the essence of his entire life's efforts. After going through the list of his written works one can conclude that he made an eternal contribution on certain most important topics. Although his writings focus more on history and biographies, he did not disregard other themes.

No matter what, this man of Allāh rendered unforgettable services to Islam with his pen and tongue. Any person who reads any of his Arabic or Urdu book, or listens to any of his speech will most certainly experience religious sentiment and Islamic pride awakening within himself. Much has been written about Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* and much more will be written in the future. Each person will express his relationship with Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. This is a sign of his general popularity and a manifestation of the following Hadith:

يوضع له القبول في الأرض

He will enjoy popularity and acceptance on earth.

Why should this not be the case? After all, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* wrote numerous biographies of reformers, Sufi masters and 'ulamā'. Allāh's rule is:

هل جزاء الاحسان الا الاحسان

The recompense for good is nothing but good.

The actual recompense he will receive in the Hereafter. However, it is not far-fetched for one to receive good praises of the creation in this very world. In his explanation of the verse:

ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة

O our Lord! Give us the good of this world.

‘Allāmah Ālūsī *rahimahullāh* says that it could also refer to the praises which are showered on a person by the creation.

May Allāh *ta’ālā* bless Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* with the highest stages in Jannatul Firdaus and confer him with the best of rewards on behalf of the Muslim ummat. And may Allāh *ta’ālā* create excellent deputies to take Hadrat Maulānā’s place.

The book, *Nuqūsh Wa Āthār Mufakkir-e-Islam*, of our honourable Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib is getting ready for publication and his special associate, Maulānā Faḍl Maḥmūd Sāhib is doing its proofreading.

Allāh *ta’ālā* enabled me to travel with him from Sūrat to Allāhābād. The company one keeps and the environment certainly have an effect on a person. Through the blessings of these contributions we were able to pen these few words.

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib is from among those Allāh-inspired personalities who is conveying immense spiritual and academic blessings to countless people through his programme of purification, instruction and various writings. This book is also a great link in that chain. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable Hadrat’s blessings to spread throughout the world, and to

bless this book with popularity as He did with his other books. Āmīn.

Was salām

Muḥammad Ayyūb Surtī

27 Jumādā ath-Thānīyah 1425 A.H.

15 August 2004

EXTRACTS FROM SAWĀNIH MUFAKKIR-E-ISLAM

Maulānā Sayyid Bilāl ‘Abd al-Hayy Hasanī Sāhib

Noble Family

His lineage is that of a Sayyid from the Hasanī and Husaynī family. His father’s name was Hakīm Sayyid ‘Abd al-Hayy Hasanī (d. 15 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1341 A.H./2 February 1923). He was a celebrated historian, Hadīth scholar and Sufi master of India. He was born on 18 Ramaḍān al-Mubārak 1286 A.H. in Dā’irah Shāh ‘Alamullāh, Rāi Bareilly. He spent a part of his infancy in the lap of his maternal grandmother who had pledged bay‘at to Hadrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh* and was herself an ardent worshipper and ascetic.

Hadrat’s honourable mother, Sayyidah Khayr an-Nisā’ Behtar Sāhibah (d. 6 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1388 A.H./31 August 1968) was a distinguished woman of her time. She possessed a special affiliation with asceticism, worship, abstinence, piety, supplication and private conversation with Allāh *ta’ālā*.

Blessed Birth

Hadrat was born on 6 Muḥarram al-Harām 1332 A.H./15 December 1913 in a small village in Rāi Bareilly (which is known as Dā’irah Shāh ‘Alamullāh, and well-known as Takiyah Kalān. This little village has the honour of being a centre of tauḥīd, the Sunnat and the movement of jihād for several centuries). Hadrat’s ‘aqīqah was performed on the seventh day after his birth and, in line with the

name of Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, he was given the name Abul Hasan 'Alī.

Early Education

He was most probably four years old when his reading of *Bismillāh...* was formally done in Rāi Bareilly by his uncle, Maulānā Sayyid 'Azīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Since he lived most of the time in Lucknow, his formal education was initiated there. As per the family practice, he completed the Qur'ān at the age of seven. His father organized a small feast to express his gratitude over this milestone.

Formal Education

Hadrat's formal Urdu education commenced under his uncle, Maulānā 'Azīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib who, at the time, was working at the office of Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. In those days, the Dār al-'Ulūm office and its library were housed in a building in Gaulah Ganj near Khātūn Manzil. Hadrat's house was about 400 metres away. Bearing in mind his tender age, this was quite a distance. Hadrat commenced the Urdu alphabet with *Qā'idah Baghdādī*. After studying a sufficient amount of Urdu, he commenced with Persian, as per his family tradition. He was given the first Persian primer of Anjuman Himāyat al-Islam. An experienced Persian teacher by the name of Maulānā Maḥmūd 'Alī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was chosen for this purpose. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to him: "He was a very cultured, affectionate and experienced teacher." Together with studying Persian, Hadrat read the books, *Ta'līm al-Islam* and *Nūr al-Īmān*, which were written by his father, Maulānā Hakīm Sayyid 'Abd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He learnt calligraphy during the same

period. This was considered to be an important and essential part of the syllabus.

Interest in Books

Generally this age in one of playing and jumping around, and an aversion for books. However, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* had a keen interest in books. In fact, we could say that books were his toys and items of interest. His home environment also played a major part in this.

Demise of His Father

After a short period of illness, Hadrat's father departed from this world on 15 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1341 A.H. on a Friday. Hadrat had the honour of serving his father until the very final moments. He writes in this regard: "It was my good fortune that I began massaging my father's legs without anyone telling me or without him indicating to me."

There is probably some wisdom in the fact that some time before his demise, his father asked for oranges and instructed: "Give them to 'Alī." At the time of his demise, his eldest son, Maulānā Sayyid 'Abd al-'Alī Sāhib was 1 000 miles away in Madras. He only received the news when he came to Mumbai. When he returned to Lucknow and reached Rāi Bareilly, he proceeded directly to his father's grave. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* relates: "I joined my brother. On reaching the grave, my level of patience was filled and I developed an extraordinary change since that day."

Temporary Stay in Takiyah

Hadrat could not remain in Lucknow after the demise of his father. His eldest brother, Dr. 'Abd al-

‘Alī Sāhib was studying at the time. The family did not possess any properties or other sources of income. This is why Ḥaḍrat had to live temporarily in Rāi Bareilly for about one and half years. He had already commenced his studies in Persian under Maulānā Maḥmūd Sāhib in Lucknow. Acting under the advice of his brother, he continued this programme in Rāi Bareilly. Sayyid Muḥammad Ismā‘īl Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was the son of Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Sāhib *rahimahullāh*’s maternal grandson. He was quite proficient in Persian. Ḥaḍrat commenced studying the *Bustān* under him. Master Muḥammad Zamān Sāhib was appointed to teach him maths and Urdu writing. Master Muḥammad Zamān Sāhib used to come from a nearby village known as Lūhānī Pūr. Ḥaḍrat’s youngest maternal uncle, Maulānā Hāfiz ‘Ubaydullāh Sāhib loved him dearly and showed due concern for his education. However, he received his fundamental training from his mother.

Commencement of Arabic Studies

The teaching of Arabic in India was with the sole objective of being able to understand the essential books of Ḥadīth, jurisprudence and scholastic theology. There was no concept of studying it in-depth and to become a master in it. All efforts were focussed on studying Persian, and the trend in respectable families was to pay full attention to it. The study of Persian was also given due importance in Ḥaḍrat’s family. His grandfather, Hakīm Sayyid Fakhr ad-Dīn Khīyālī *rahimahullāh* was a poet and a master in the Persian language. His father also had a keen interest in it. His eldest brother, Maulānā Hakīm Dr. Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Alī Sāhib was himself an expert in Persian and could converse in it without any hesitation. However, his far-sightedness gauged

that interest in Persian was waning in India and that its importance will come to a complete end. Its benefit will become confined to reading the statements and letters of the Sufis or the poetic collections of the poets. Hadrat's progress in Persian had reached this level. This is why Dr. Sāhib stopped his Persian studies. On one hand he made him to start an English reader, and on the other side, he paid special attention to his Arabic education. He made such a wise arrangement that it can be considered to be nothing but a divine inspiration.

There was a high likelihood that he would admit Hadrat *rahimahullāh* into the Dār al-'Ulūm of which he himself was one of its senior administrators and was later made its rector. However, this was a divine arrangement from the all-wise and all-knowing Allāh *ta'ālā*. After all, Hadrat was to render rectificational and reformational services on an international level, and he was to address the Arabs and remind them of their responsibilities. This was thus a divine scheme from Allāh *ta'ālā* that Dr. Sāhib handed over Hadrat into the hands of Shaykh Khalīl ibn Muḥammad 'Arab Yamānī *rahimahullāh* who, at the time, was a most distinguished Arabic teacher. According to Hadrat *rahimahullāh*, the Shaykh did not merely possess a taste for the language but was immersed in it. Dr. Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had a friendly and informal relationship with the Shaykh. He lived in the same area where Maulānā 'Abd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had been living for a long time. Dr. Sāhib *rahimahullāh* also shifted to this area soon thereafter.

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was joined only by the Shaykh's brother, Shaykh Husayn 'Arab *rahimahullāh*. Thus, Hadrat received a major share

of the Shaykh's attention and power of teaching. This is something which a large class of students does not get. Furthermore, when the Shaykh noticed Hadrat's enthusiasm, he opened his heart to him.

When some of the seniors of the family saw Hadrat's Arabic education, they criticized Dr. Sāhib and asked him to get Hadrat ready for the I.C.S. and to get him to study contemporary sciences. Dr. Sāhib was firm by nature and spoke very little. He firmly replied: "I am imparting that education to 'Alī which Miyā would have imparted to him." (Dr. Sāhib used to refer to his father as Miyā). This was a frank and forthright reply which silenced everyone. Time then saw the wisdom behind this decision and how far-sighted it was.

Another point which is worth mentioning here is that when Hadrat embarked on his first journey to Lahore, his uncle, Maulānā Sayyid Talhah Sāhib rahimahullāh, got him to meet Maulānā Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib who was the principal of a college. Hadrat's uncle asked the principal for his opinion as to which course of study Hadrat should pursue. After seeing some of Hadrat's articles, the principal said: "He should make Arabic his focal subject. He must progress in it and develop proficiency in it."

Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'

Hadrat's relationship with Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' was a family and inherited relationship. His elder brother not only bore this way of thinking but invited to it. Hadrat also grew up in the same line. However, he became formally and directly connected to it only when he commenced studying jurisprudence under an old and popular lecturer of the Dār al-'Ulūm, viz. Maulānā Shibli Sāhib Jirājpūrī

rahimahullāh. This was most probably towards the end of 1928. Maulānā Shiblī *rahimahullāh* was most affectionate towards Hadrat and he had an old bond with Hadrat's family. The following incident can give an indication of this bond: On one occasion in the course of teaching, he said to Hadrat: "There is no sign of polytheism and bid'at in our region." He then asked: "Do you know why?" Hadrat said: "I would prefer if you tell me why." He replied: "This is through the blessings of your elders: Hadrat Khwājah Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Muḥammad Amīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh*."

Pledge of Allegiance to Hadrat Khalīfah Ghulām Muḥammad Sāhib Dīnpūrī

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* himself relates:

It was on some day in June 1931 or 1932 when I left for Khānpūr on the Karachi Mail (name of a train). One of my classmates and friends, Maulwī Muḥammad Mūsā Sindhī, was accompanying me on this journey. He was a very righteous and capable youngster. We reached Khānpūr at maghrib time. From there we proceeded to Dīnpūr. We most probably had the opportunity of meeting Hadrat that very night. I don't think I ever saw an illuminated face like his before this. He spoke very little. When he did speak, he spoke in a pure stately language which was a combination of Multānī and Sindhī, and to which I was totally unaccustomed. Life in Dīnpūr itself was unique. It was dīnpūr (filled with Dīn) in the true sense of the word. In line with

the Qādrī Sufi order, the masjid, khānqāh and inhabitancy would reverberate with loud dhikr all the time. If a person had to call out for someone, he would say: “Illallāh”, and the person too would reply by saying: “Illallāh.” In this way, no loud voice except for the adhān, loud dhikr and Illallāh would be heard.

Dīnpūr was a small village in which Hadrat *rahimahullāh*’s associates lived. It had a few semi-solid houses which could not have been more than five to seven. There was a simple masjid with a few basic rooms for those engaged in dhikr. It had a few date palms which reminded a person of the Bedouin villages of the Arabs. The air too was similar to the Arab rural areas. There was a public kitchen for the residents of the khānqāh. It contained purely Sindhī and Bahāwalpūrī food which was a true manifestation of food which is just enough for one’s survival. It was extremely difficult and a severe test for us who were accustomed to the delicacies of Ūdh. The heat was intense, a hot wind would blow throughout the day, while the night used to get a bit cool.

This was Dīnpūr which I could visit just two times in my life. The first was in 1931 or 1932, and the second time was in 1958 or just after it. This was after Khalīfah Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away. I went there for one night.

Hadrat Khalifah Sāhib was over 90 years old at the time. The letter from Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Sāhib was read to him. It probably introduced me as a relative of Hadrat Sayyid [Aḥmad Shahīd] Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* inducted me into the Sufi order and taught me how to make dhikr with the heart.

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* related this incident several times to us:

After pledging bay'at to him, I felt the desire to serve him. In those days, there used to be a hand-drawn fan which used to be controlled by pulling a rope. I began pulling it and after a short while I realized that I was not up to this task. However, since I had demonstrated my enthusiasm in the first place, I could not stop. At the same time, I could not continue. Hadrat Khalifah Sāhib *rahimahullāh* realized this through divine exposition. He pointed towards me and asked me to bring water for him. I brought the water and presented it to him. He drank some of it, gave the remainder to me, and asked me to drink.

I returned to Lucknow after staying over in Dinpūr for 3-4 days. Hadrat Khalifah Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away thereafter. I considered Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Sāhib Lahorī *rahimahullāh* to be my shaykh and mentor. I continued

corresponding with him and my bond with him increased.

Deoband

During a visit in 1932, Dr. Sāhib *rahimahullāh* presented Hadrat before Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*. The latter advised that he should spend some time in Deoband. Hadrat therefore went to Deoband in Rabī' al-Awwal or Rabī' ath-Thānī of that year. Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* accommodated Hadrat as his guest. Hadrat used to attend his classes and continued benefiting from him in other ways as well. This was especially so with regard to understanding certain difficult aspects of the Qur'ān. Hadrat wanted a special time from Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* for this purpose. The latter set aside a time on Fridays. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* relates:

From these lessons, I gauged his level of reflecting on the Qur'ān.

When Dr. Sāhib learnt that Hadrat was living formally with Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*, he instructed Hadrat to live in the Dār al-'Ulūm hostel and to purchase his food from the Dār al-'Ulūm kitchen. When Hadrat sought Hadrat Madanī's permission for this, he expressed a certain amount of disapproval but eventually granted him permission. However, he said to Hadrat that he will have to join him for breakfast daily.

Maulānā Habībullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was the son of Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* was also studying in Deoband during the same period. Due to his relationship with Hadrat

Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Lāhorī *rahimahullāh*, Ḥaḍrat maintained a contact with him.

During the same period, Ḥaḍrat used to attend the *Sharḥ Niqāyah* lessons of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā I’zāz ‘Alī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* (the Shaykh al-Adab of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband). Ḥaḍrat *rahimahullāh* relates in this regard:

I benefited tremendously from these lessons. The Maulānā was very affectionate towards me and this bond remained until the end. When my book, *Mukhtārāt*, was printed and sent to him, he raised his voice and expressed his approval of it to those who were present in his assembly.¹

Also during this period, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib [Kashmīrī] *rahimahullāh* came to Deoband from Dhābel. Dr. Sāhib had previously instructed Ḥaḍrat to go and meet him and to convey his salām to him. When Ḥaḍrat conveyed the salām to him, he remembered Dr. Sāhib and asked about his wellbeing. Ḥaḍrat attended his after-‘aṣr assemblies for a few days.

Also during his stay in Deoband, Ḥaḍrat used to go to Qārī Asghar ‘Alī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and study the Ḥafṣ mode of qirā’at under him.

Ḥaḍrat *rahimahullāh* says with reference to his stay in Deoband:

Ḥaḍrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* was the means for my attachment and the centre

¹ *Kārwān-e-Zindagī*, vol. 1, p. 131.

of my kinship during my four-month stay in Deoband. My fundamental affinity was with him. I recall how he would address me in the morning with his own peculiar manner of speech and say: “Maulwī ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib! Tell me, what did you read in the newspapers today?” I used to replay this statement the entire day, thoroughly enjoy it, and my heart would not only be filled with joy but would feel intoxicated.

When the examinations at Dār al-‘Ulūm commenced and the text-books were completed, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* returned to Lucknow in Sha‘bān.

Journey to Lahore

While Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was in Deoband, he made an intention that he would attend the lessons of Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Sāhib Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* and complete the course prescribed by him. He proceeded to Lahore a few days after his return from Deoband. Details which describe his stay there are quoted from Hadrat himself:

I decided to travel to Lahore towards the end of Sha‘bān 1351 A.H. or the beginning of Ramaḍān (this was probably in December 1932). I became a formal student of Madrasah Qāsim al-‘Ulūm. This course entailed a study of the entire Qur’ān. Only graduates of the various madāris or those who were in the final year of study used to attend. It was known as an “‘ulamā’ class”. It used to commence at the end of Sha‘bān and continue until the middle of Dhū al-Qa‘dah. We were almost 50 students,

most of whom were graduates of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. Included among them was my Hadīth classmate, Maulānā Sibghatullāh Bakhtiyārī *rahimahullāh*. He was a very hardworking student with an extremely strong memory. We had to prepare a summary and references for each rukū‘. Furthermore, we had to give an exam for the previous lesson before commencing the next one. When a student was apportioned a rukū‘ to prepare, he had to write the summary in the words set down by Maulānā Sindhī, and state the Qur’ān sources for it.

Teaching and Lecturing

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was appointed as a teacher in tafsīr and Arabic literature on the 1st of August 1934. On his commencement, he decided to live in the Dār al-‘Ulūm itself so that he could devote himself to teaching with full concentration and focus. Maulānā Mas‘ūd ‘Ālam Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was living in the same room as Hadrat. In this way, it was their living quarters and also the office of the periodical, *ad-Diyā*. Although Maulānā Mas‘ūd ‘Ālam Sāhib was one year ahead of Hadrat *rahimahullāh* during their student years, Hadrat had immense academic and mental affinity with him.

In his first year of teaching, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was given the second volume of *Tirmidhī Sharīf* and the first ten pārs of the Qur’ān to teach to the sixth year students. In addition to this, he had to teach sections of *Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah*, *Tārīkh al-Umam al-Islāmīyyah* of Khudārī, and a few Arabic readers to the foundation phase students.

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to his tafsīr lessons:

I brought the old tafsīr books and original source books from the library. Some of these books, e.g. *al-Kashshāf*, *Ma'ālim at-Tanzīl*, *Tafsīr al-Baghawī* and *Madārik* I read word-for-word. From the more recent tafāsīr, I benefited a lot from *Tafsīr al-Manār* and then the *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* of Maulānā Āzād.

When it came to the actual teaching and replying to questions posed by students, I found the most help from *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* of Ālūsī. As for modern facts and comparative studies, I started corresponding with Maulānā 'Abd al-Mājid Daryābādī *rahimahullāh* and got answers from him to my questions. To this end, I went to Daryābād on several occasions and benefited from the Maulānā.

Note: Just look at Hadrat Maulānā's focus and concentration for the sake of teaching, and how much of sacrifices he made to study these various books! Only after this can a person become a scholar and teacher like 'Alī Miyā. Students must pay particular attention to this aspect. They must bear difficulties and hardships to acquire knowledge of Dīn and to become experts in this field. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Marriage

Before Hadrat could take residence in Dār al-'Ulūm, he got married to his cousin (the daughter of his

maternal uncle), Sayyidah Tayyibun Nisā' Sāhibah rahimahallāh. She was the paternal granddaughter of Hadrat Shāh Diyā' an-Nabī rahimahullāh and the maternal granddaughter of Maulānā Sayyid 'Abd ar-Razzāq Kalāmī, the author of Simsām al-Islam. The marriage was performed by Hadrat Maulānā Haydar Hasan Khān Sāhib rahimahullāh and Dr. Sāhib made the arrangements for a walimah.

Hadrat's Critical Article on the Muslim League

During this period, the Muslim League movement was quite active. Due to its differences with Jam'iyyatul 'Ulamā', and especially with Hadrat Madanī rahimahullāh, the angle of discrediting the 'ulamā' had crept into this movement. Dr. Sāhib rahimahullāh was a close associate and follower of Hadrat Madanī rahimahullāh and his entire household was a defender and supporter of the Jam'iyyat. The Khāksār movement fuelled the fire even more and people had become extremely audacious and impudent. Hadrat rahimahullāh wrote a critical article on the Khāksār movement which was then published in *al-Furqān*. Hadrat writes in reference to this article:

I evaluated this movement on an academic level. I placed the examples of the Khawārij and Bāṭiniyyah before me and compared this movement to them. I then proved that mere organization, unity, enthusiasm and fervour, sacrifices and discipline – in fact, even worship (which was a distinguishing feature of the Khawārij) – are not proofs of being on the truth and do not guarantee acceptance in Allāh's sight. The fundamental is to have

correct beliefs, a correct objective, and to follow the Shari'ah.

Note: Māshā Allāh this is a most excellent theme which clarifies the fundamental reality. Every movement ought to ponder and reflect over it. No one must be deceived by mere actions – even by acts of worship. One must constantly make this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنَا وَّسَدِّدْنَا

O Allāh! Guide us and keep us on the right track.

The Fundamentals and Basics to Studying the Qur'ān

Hadrat had been conducting Qur'ān lessons from the very beginning. He was responsible for teaching the first ten pāras of the Qur'ān for several years. It was around 1939-1940 when the thought came to him that students do not know many fundamentals, principles and basics when it comes to studying the Qur'ān and deriving correct benefit from it. He felt the need to prepare certain themes which would aid students in this regard. This is why he began preparing articles which were published periodically in *an-Nadwah*. Later on, these articles were collated and published as a book which is titled *Muṭāla'ah-e-Qur'ān Ke Uṣūl Wa Mabādī* (The Fundamentals and Basics to Studying the Qur'ān). It was published by Maktabah Islam. It contains themes which are most useful, essential and enlightening for those who are occupied with the Qur'ān.

Jamā'at-e-Islamī

Hadrat had first met Maulānā Maudūdī on a journey to Lahore. He had been reading his articles since 1934-1935. Hadrat writes in this regard:

The basis of my interest and inclination to the Maulānā's writings and his Jamā'at were those distinguished articles which he wrote against Western civilization, its philosophy of life, and its materialistic outlook.

The Maulānā came to Lucknow in 1941 and stayed over at the Dār al-'Ulūm guesthouse. During the same period, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* became a formal member of the movement which was initiated by Maulānā Muḥammad Manzūr Nu'mānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and was appointed as the person in charge for the Lucknow area. The Maulānā came to Lucknow a second time and, acting under the request of Hadrat *rahimahullāh*, he read a paper at the Dār al-'Ulūm on the topic *A New System of Education*.

Hadrat travelled to Lahore in 1942 to attend the working committee meeting of the Jamā'at. Also in the same year, a working committee meeting was held in Delhi which Hadrat attended. From Delhi, Hadrat accompanied the Maulānā to 'Aligarh and remained with him for one or two days. Hadrat writes in this regard:

I gauged the Maulānā's popularity in the university environment. It was a reflection of the conditions of that time, the mental confusion of Muslim youth, and their spiritual thirst.

Hadrat remained attached to the Jamā'at for about three years. He writes:

During this period, three perceptions developed within me. These compelled me to rethink and re-examine my affiliation with the Jamā'at.

1. I noticed members of the Jamā'at developing a fanatical and extremist mindset with regard to the personality of the Maulānā. They were becoming more and more distant from having noble thoughts about any other thinker, author and propagator; from having confidence in him and benefiting from his writings.

2. The element of criticism was increasing in them, and they were becoming audacious towards other 'ulamā' and religious circles.

3. I did not see in them any religious progress, enthusiasm to increase in good actions, no interest in rectification of the self, and no sound effort in trying to develop a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Note: We learn from this that if these three elements are found in any group or organization, then every perceptive person will have to rethink his affiliation with such a group or organization. If not, it will be classified as deceit. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. (compiler)

Hadrat writes further:

My meetings with Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* increased my impressions

about him because his temperament was closest to the temperament of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, the life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the spirit of inviting towards Islam. This caused my mental conflict to increase to the extent that I informed Maulānā Maudūdī about it who then advised me to remain aloof from him.

Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī

Hadrat went to meet Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat rahimahullāh in 1942. This is how it happened: Hadrat was accompanying Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās rahimahullāh from Shāhidrah to Sahāranpūr. Thānah Bhawan was on the way. Hadrat rahimahullāh first wrote a letter to Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh of his intended visit, took permission from Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib rahimahullāh and proceeded to Thānā Bhawan. The course of the story is as related by Hadrat himself. He writes:

I entered the khānqāh. Due to the extreme heat and the fact that it was afternoon, everything was still and silent. I placed my luggage in one corner and sat down. The adhān for zuhr ṣalāh was called after some time. The Maulānā entered, and I did not consider it appropriate to introduce myself at that time. His assembly commenced after the zuhr ṣalāh, I joined it and sat to one side. When I entered, my eyes fell on the desk which was in front of the Maulānā. *Sīrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd* was also placed on the desk. This caused my diffidence and

hesitancy to decrease considerably. The Maulānā was busy replying to letters. After a few minutes he said to Khwājah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ḥasan Ṣāhib: “Dr. ‘Abd al-‘Alī Ṣāhib’s brother was supposed to come. Has he arrived?” I went forward and said that I am here. He said: “Why didn’t you inform me?” I replied: “I did not want to disturb Ḥaḍrat.” He said: “What could be more disturbing than not knowing about your arrival. I would have felt ashamed, sorrowful, remorseful...” He added several other words. Contrary to his norm, he took me as his guest and went to pains in serving me both meals. He said: “Because of you [your expected arrival] I had completed replying to many letters from before hand so that I could converse with you at ease.” This was an extreme mark of respect from Ḥaḍrat.

Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāhib

Ḥaḍrat met Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* for the first time in 1940. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* paid special attention to him during this very first meeting. Ḥaḍrat was most impressed by him. For details about the incidents and meetings which followed, refer to the original book – *Sawāniḥ Mufakkir Islam* – or Ḥaḍrat’s book, *Kārwān-e-Zindagī*.

Special Attention to Ḥaḍrat

During this entire period, the attention of Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* towards Ḥaḍrat increased by the day. When writing letters to Ḥaḍrat, he would address him in a manner which

not only demonstrated his affection and love for Hadrat, but reverence and confidence in him. He writes in one of his letters to Hadrat:

The valuable letter from your respected self was a cause of opening the core of my heart.

He writes in another letter:

The expected arrival of your respected self is reviving and refreshing everyone's faces. May Allāh *ta'ālā* accept you as an intercessor in my favour in both worlds.

He addresses Hadrat in yet another letter:

My master and the master of the world.

Hadrat made it a point of going to Nizāmuddīn every month. He used to join the important journeys and assemblies. Dr. Sāhib also supported and fully appreciated the da'wat and movement of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

While they were in Mewāt on one of their journeys, someone placed Maulānā Ilyās's bed in such a manner that its foot-side was at the head-side of Hadrat's bed. When Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* saw this, he expressed his intense displeasure and said to those who were with him: "You have been with me for so many days and yet you cannot perceive this much!?"

During this entire period, Hadrat also had the honour of being a translator for Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib, and the latter's reliance on him increased by the day. He used to request Hadrat to address the people on important occasions. Hadrat writes in this regard:

On one occasion I left Lucknow and reached Nizāmuddīn at night. The next morning, the Maulānā instructed me to lead the people in the ṣalāh. After completing the ṣalāh, he asked me to say a few words. I replied: “I have absolutely nothing in my mind at present.” He said: “Just start saying something.” When I started, I felt as if the Maulānā was focusing on me and the themes were flowing into me. Based on this confidence in me and my experiences with him, I collated a book titled *Ek Aham Dīnī Daʿwat* (an important religious call) in the light of the Maulānā’s letters and statements which he wrote to me. The Maulānā heard this book read to him from beginning to end. He made a few slight changes in the wordings, and after listening to it, he made a lot of duʿā’ for me.

By virtue of this affinity and confidence, Hadrat would bring me closer to him and liked me to join his assemblies. On one occasion, there was a need for some people to go out and meet a few people in the surrounding areas. Those who were responsible for this, sent me as well. When the Maulānā came to know that I was also sent, he said to those who were responsible: “I had just one person who could understand my words, and you sent him away. Now who should I address and speak to?”

Note: We learn from this that Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* did not interact with everyone equally. He neither stipulated a single course of action nor did he use “the same stick” on everyone. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us to work with similar wisdom and insight. Āmīn. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Engrossment With Tablīgh And Da’wat

The affections of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* increased on one hand, and Hadrat’s became more and more engrossed with the work of tablīgh and da’wat to the extent that Hadrat decided to give up his employment at Dār al-‘Ulūm. When Hadrat mentioned this to Hadrat Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he said: “Our seniors do not advise anyone to leave his livelihood and employment until alternate arrangements are made.” When Hadrat mentioned this a second time, Hadrat Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* gave the same answer. Hadrat writes in this regard:

The Maulānā was probably assessing my nature and the firmness of my resolution. After the fajr ṣalāh and the lecture which follows it, the Maulānā himself asked me: “Maulānā, what wage do you receive from the Dār al-‘Ulūm?” I replied: “Fifty rupees.” On hearing this, he said with full fervour: “O Hadrat! Thousands will be at your beck and call.” Saying this, he granted me permission.

Hadrat continued rendering his services to the Dār al-‘Ulūm in an honorary capacity until the end of 1943. During this period he continued with his tablīghī journeys with full enthusiasm. However,

under the insistence of 'Allāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh*, he re-attached himself officially to the Dār al-'Ulūm on the 1st of December 1943. Also on the insistence of the 'Allāmah, he accepted a salary. This continued for just one year.

Hadrat had the opportunity of going to several madāris during these tablighī journeys. A major benefit of this was that a gulf which existed among the madāris was removed. Especially between Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' and the old madāris (Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and Madrasah Mazāhir al-'Ulūm being the first on the list). The barrier which existed between them was removed, and in its place, closeness, contacts and confidence developed. A need was felt for this since quite some time among the educational institutes and religious centres which belonged to the same creed and had the same objectives.

Hadrat's Stand After The Demise of Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib

Hadrat remained fully immersed in the tablighī work while Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was alive. The latter showered so much of affection and attention to him, that he did not even think of any other movement or way of thinking. However, this condition did not remain after his demise.

The following lines which Hadrat wrote with reference to Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* apply fully to Hadrat himself:

Loftiness of purpose was the hallmark of his life. He was not satisfied with the level of his era and the rank of his contemporaries as regards his thinking

and practices. The progressive level which he reached echoed with the following words: “O traveller! This is not your station.”

Hadrat explains his position in an article titled *Merā Mauqif Aur Tarīq-e-Fikr* (my standpoint and thinking). It is quoted concisely here:

While having a very deep bond with the personality of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, full confidence in his outlook and religious devotion, conviction in the need and benefit of this work, and not only taking part practically but fulfilling the responsibilities of an inviter and translator, the fact of the matter is that my mind was not completely subdued, and no other mental and rational form took its place.

I had a rational and academic background. I not only studied reformational and revivalist movements and their central personalities, but also had the honour of writing about them. I differentiated between the texts and non-texts of each era, and of the objectives and the means. I feel that the search for the best and the most useful never comes to an end. Similarly, I consider it necessary for every movement, every call and every institute which is established for the service of Dīn and to elevate Allāh’s word to be able to give growth and progress to life, to be aware of its

challenges and issues, to perfect it to the level of permissibility and necessity, and to endeavour to apply it to life. If not, that movement and institute will be deprived of progress and life, will succumb to stagnation, and its usefulness will become more and more restricted.

These thoughts which were products of my specific environment, my studies and my mental outlook did not leave me in any era. Even while the Maulānā was alive, I would occasionally read the following couplet of Iqbāl in privacy:

It was in this conflict that the nights of my life passed. Sometimes it was the burning heat and pain of Rūmī, while at other times it was the perplexity and agitation of Rāzī.

However, the strength of the Maulānā's affinity, his unrestricted affection, and practical preoccupation had subdued this thought for as long as he was alive. Once he passed away, it began gushing forth openly. The first form it took was that this work which had now spread throughout India and was advancing towards other countries needs to be more organized, more effective, and made more attractive to the educated class while remaining within the principles of da'wat and upholding its core elements (which, in this movement are known as the six points). Few changes must be made, and more additions are needed. I spoke about

this in several assemblies with Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and members of his consultative body. However, I gauged that his mind was not inclined to it and did not support it. This initial stage of da'wat after the demise of the Maulānā probably needed this caution. After drawing his attention to this on several occasions, I concluded that as long as the mind of the dā'ī (the one engaged in da'wat) – who is the soul of the da'wat – does not perceive any need and does not feel the need for any change, then it is not beneficial and effective to give counsel from the outside.

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib *rahimahullāh* fully valued and appreciated Hadrat. He also acknowledged Hadrat's sacrifices in this work. However, he wanted to continue the work in exactly the same manner as chosen by Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Despite the expansion in the work, he did not want to expand the modus operandi of the work. An extract from a lengthy letter which Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had written to Hadrat is presented here:

The most respectable and most honourable Janāb Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Sāhib

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Honourable Hadrat! I acknowledge with my heart that you valued and appreciated Hadrat Marḥūm [Maulānā Muḥammad

Ilyās Sāhib] at a time when this insignificant person was not appreciating him. You took a step towards this work at a time when I was turning away from it. You used to listen, put it into action, understand it and preserve it. You were fully engrossed in it, and you were progressing swiftly towards the work of da'wat. Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred a special effect in your da'wat. It was through your da'wat that this work spread to the neighbouring countries, and it was through you that it reached the educated circles.

You were at the forefront in taking jamā'ats comprising of 'ulamā' and going out with them. You were the one who went forward in taking this da'wat to the educated class. Hadrat Marhūm used to assess the temperaments of the 'ulamā' through you, and remove their doubts and misgivings through you.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward you fully because you really supported and helped him.

Subsequently, Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* decided that there is no harm in making the work more beneficial and in using his tongue to explain it and call towards it while maintaining his bond with the centre at Nizāmuddīn and continuing his preoccupation in the work of da'wat. This programme extended from 1944 to 1952. It produced excellent results in Lucknow and surrounding areas. The scholars and educated class of this region became attracted to this work.

Khilāfat From Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lāhorī

Although Hadrat had pledged bay'at to Hadrat Khalīfah Ghulām Muḥammad Dīnpūrī *rahimahullāh* – who was the shaykh of Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* – his training remained under Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh*. Despite Hadrat's preoccupations in the fields of teaching and education, writing and compiling books, da'wat and tabligh, confidence in and love for Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh*; his spiritual affiliation with Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* was not only maintained but continued progressing.

Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* went on ḥajj in 1946. On his return, Hadrat wrote a congratulatory letter to his shaykh. In his reply, Hadrat Lāhorī called Hadrat to Lahore. While in Lahore, he called Hadrat in privacy conferred permission to him in the Qādirīyyah spiritual family. He also related to Hadrat the extraordinary du'ā' and istikhārah which he made while he was in Masjid-e-Khayf in Minā, and on account of which he received an indication from the unseen to confer permission and khilāfat to Hadrat.

The love and affection of Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* can be gauged to a certain extent from the letters which he wrote to his most beloved disciple.

He writes in one letter:

I do not consider it necessary to pen the respect which I have for you in my heart. On the night of ḥajj, I made du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* in Masjid-e-Khayf for an increase in your ranks. All praise is due to Allāh

ta'ālā I found that it was accepted in Allāh's court.

He writes in another letter:

Since you are mine, whatever bounty Allāh *ta'ālā* confers you with is a source of pride for me. Whatever joy I experience at the progress of Maulwī Habībullāh (my eldest son), I experience a similar joy at your progress. In fact, based on certain reasons, I experience more joy and happiness at your progress.

He writes in yet another letter:

I do not think anyone else in the world experiences as much joy and happiness which I experience at your success. My heart constantly beseeches Allāh *ta'ālā* for your progress in both worlds.

On one occasion, an assembly was being conducted on the edge of the pond of the Shāhī Masjid. Without any prelude, Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* suddenly said: "Maulwī Abul Hasan Sāhib! I attest to your nobility." He repeated this statement three times.

A scholar of Punjab, Maulānā 'Abd al-Hannān Sāhib relates: "We were in the Punjab jail. Maulānā 'Aṭā'ullāh Shāh Bukhārī and other senior scholars used to visit. Without any prelude and previous discussion, Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Sāhib [Lāhorī] said in one of his assemblies: "You people must make *du'ā* for Maulwī Abul Hasan Sāhib." Everyone raised their hands and made *du'ā*."

Hadrat's bond and love for Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* can be gauged from the article which

he wrote about the latter in *Purāne Chirāgh*. Hadrat writes with reference to the letters which he wrote to him:

When I read the Maulānā's letters, his fatherly affection and mentor-like attention cause a pain in my heart.

These letters are a solace to a grieving heart, and a means of genuine tranquillity and comfort for despondency and broken heartedness.

Khilāfat From Hadrat Maulānā Rāipūrī

After the demise of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat's bond and relationship with Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* became more concrete. Hadrat Rāipūrī's affection and attention began to increase. Hadrat relates:

When I went to Rāipūr, I felt as if this was the only island which was saved from the dark oceans of materialism and rationalism which were spreading from all sides. Apart from remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* and reflecting over Him, no other subject was discussed and bothered about. The word "Allāh, Allāh" was emanating from every leaf.

When the country was divided [into India and Pakistan] in 1947, it became very difficult for Hadrat to go regularly to Lahore and to present himself in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lāhorī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* who himself had immense respect for and confidence in Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh*, advised Hadrat to go to him and benefit from his company. In this way,

Hadrat's bond with Hadrat Rāipūrī rahimahullāh strengthened, while the latter's affection, attention and love for Hadrat also increased. It increased to the extent that when Hadrat Rāipūrī rahimahullāh heard of the impending arrival of Hadrat, he would start awaiting his arrival. If he was delayed in arriving, he would express his yearning to meet him. When he did arrive, he would accord special attention to him in the course of his stay.

The effect of this bond and love for Hadrat was that Lucknow had the honour of Hadrat Rāipūrī rahimahullāh coming to this city on seven occasions. On two occasions, Hadrat Rāipūrī rahimahullāh also visited Hadrat's hometown, Rāi Bareilly. On his second trip which was in 1948, he conferred permission and khilāfat to Hadrat into the four Sufi orders, and especially in the Sufi order of Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd rahimahullāh.

The Establishment of the Religious Education Council

It was as a result of Hadrat's concern for the Muslim community that after the country was partitioned and it became difficult for Muslims to maintain their fundamental education, their beliefs, their creed and their identity; he initiated a formal regional movement for the Muslims to establish their own madāris and makātib in which arrangements for basic and fundamental education are made. The foundation for this movement was formally laid with Maulānā Nu'mānī rahimahullāh and the assistance of Qādī 'Adīl 'Abbāsī and Zafar Ahmad Siddiqī.

Its first sitting was held at the invitation of Qādī 'Adīl 'Abbāsī at Bastī from 30th December 1959 to the 1st of January 1960. Hadrat was selected to chair the

sitting. An organization by the name of Dīnī Ta'lim Council (Religious Education Council) was established and Hadrat was appointed as its chairman.

By virtue of the central role played by the Council, thousands of makātib were established on a regional level, and students in all the makātib were in excess of hundreds of thousands.

This was a fundamental and firm step which produced far-reaching results. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, this programme is continuing under the chairmanship of Hadrat's deputy, Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Hasanī Sāhib.

A proactive organization by the name of Nadwatul Mujāhidīn held its annual meeting on 5th February 1961 in Calicut. Acting on the request of some of the members of this organization and the intercession of certain associates, Hadrat agreed to chair this meeting. He then presented a paper titled *Millah Ibrāhīm Wa Hadārah al-Islam* whose Urdu translation was then published under the title *Islam Mukammal Dīn Mustaqil Tahdhīb* (Islam the perfect religion and a self-determining culture).

The Honour of Opening the Ka'bah

A sub-committee of the Muslim World League known as al-Majlis al-A'lā al-'Ālamī Li al-Masājid held a meeting on 16, 17 and 18 December 1996. On the last day of the meeting, the participants were invited to enter the Ka'bah. It was decided that they would go after fajr, at 6:30am. This was a time when Hadrat used to feel extremely weak, and since quite some time he used to perform the fajr ṣalāh with congregation at the place where he was staying.

Hadrat was therefore hesitant that in the presence of this intense weakness, having to uphold the protocols, and to climb the stairs in the presence of such a large crowd will be most difficult for him. Anyway, Hadrat had already enjoyed this honour on several occasions before this. Despite this, Hadrat suddenly felt that he does not know whether he will acquire this honour in the future, and that this is the favour of Allāh which He confers on whomever He wills.

On the 18th of December, he performed the fajr salāh in its earliest time, had a short breakfast, took his medication and reached the Haram Sharīf on time. There was a considerable crowd at the time, so instead of going into the maṭāf (ṭawāf area), he remained in the covered section. After some time, a person came and requested Hadrat to proceed. Because of the intense weakness which he was experiencing and the pain in his legs, Hadrat proceeded on a wheel chair until he reached the Ka'bah. Formal arrangements were made on a governmental level. Stairs were attached to the door of the Ka'bah. The grandson of King Sa'ūd, Amīr Mush'il ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd, supported Hadrat and helped him to climb up. The door was still closed. Hadrat held the handle of the door of the Ka'bah and took support from it. There was an ocean of people below who were performing the ṭawāf. The imām of his time [Hadrat] was standing on the threshold of the Lord of the House while taking support from its door handle. It was a most emotional scene. Hadrat himself was experiencing a unique feeling. A few moments later, the one who held the key to Ka'bah, Janāb Shaybī Sāhib, approached, placed the key into the keyhole,

requested Hadrat to open the door with his blessed hand, and to enter. Hadrat turned the key, opened the door with his hand, went in and proceeded directly to the corner of Rukn Yamānī. He stood there and performed two rak'ats of salāh. When he completed his salāh, the Amīr requested Hadrat to make du'ā'. Hadrat made du'ā' for the entire Muslim nation and made special du'ā' for the protection of the Haramayn Sharīfayn. The 'ulamā' and dignitaries of various countries who were present said āmīn to his du'ā'.

This was a most unique incident which was most probably unparalleled in the recent past. This gift of Allāh *ta'ālā* to Hadrat came to him in the form of an unexpected bounty. After emerging from the Ka'bah, Hadrat remained for a while in the maṭāf. Various 'ulamā' and associates congratulated him. Hadrat was an embodiment of humility and submission. He had reached that level where praise and dispraise were the same to him.

This news spread throughout the Islamic world. The Indian newspapers gave prominence to it. Indian Muslims experienced a special pride and thanked Allāh *ta'ālā*. Poets wrote praises in this regard. On Hadrat's return, some people wanted to have honorary assemblies but Hadrat did not approve and expressed his displeasure as well. The following couplet applies fully to Hadrat:

I tried my utmost to obliterate my self.
Who is it who popularized me?¹

¹ This couplet was composed by Shaykh al-'Ulamā' Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. A couplet having a

The “Vande Mataram” in Government Schools

The BJP government in U.P. was like an unsheathed sword for the Muslims. Consequently, concerned individuals and discerning ‘ulamā’ were constantly worried and suspicious. On one hand was the issue of preserving the masājīd and madāris, and on the other hand were the dangerous changes in the government schools’ syllabus which could have serious and painful consequences for the Muslim community. Suddenly a circular was sent out to all government schools making it compulsory for every student to read the “Vande Mataram”. This is a purely polytheistic song which defied the creed of monotheism. No person having imān and believing in the oneness of Allāh *ta’ālā* could ever tolerate it. The situation thus caused a lot of anxiety and apprehension to the Muslims. Positive and legal efforts were made for several months. Several sessions of the Religious Education Council of which Hadrat was the chairman made mention of their concern, and legal representations were made.

The situation continued in this way for some time, when suddenly, journalists representing the print and electronic media came to the Dār al-‘Ulūm on 19 November 1998 and asked Hadrat to make a statement in this regard. Hadrat clearly spoke of its harms and its destructive effects on the country. He then added with much fervour:

similar meaning has been composed by Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh*:

The one who obliterates himself becomes the king of the world.

The most important thing in the Muslims' life is their belief in the oneness of Allāh, and they consider its preservation a prerequisite of their faith. Our opposition is based solely on our creed. It is a purely religious and Shar'ī issue. I consider the manner in which the government wants to promulgate it in the schools to be an opposition to religion.

Hadrat added:

If this proposal is instituted, then I advise Muslims to remove their children from the government schools.

It was solely due to Hadrat's acceptance and love in Allāh's court that the situation changed suddenly after this speech. The government's attitude changed, and the task which was proving difficult to be accomplished by movements and large groups was done by the cry of just one individual. That one individual was an institution, an organization and a movement – in fact, a nation – within himself. The government apologized, the minister who had initiated this proposal was removed from his post, and his secretary was transferred.

Demise

Hadrat came to Takiyah, Rāi Bareilly on Wednesday 20 Ramaḍān 1420 A.H. Due to the severe cold and his physical weakness, he was performing his ṣalāhs and tarāwīḥ ṣalāh with congregation in his room. He was in the habit of going to his house so that he could meet and speak to the female members of his family. He would also meet and converse with those who were present in the after-tarāwīḥ assembly.

The 22nd of Ramaḍān 1420 A.H./31 December – which was a Friday – was severely cold. As was his norm, he got up for tahajjud, partook of seḥrī, performed the two Sunnat rak'ats of fajr, and the fard of fajr with congregation. He then lied down to take a rest. He woke up at about 8:30am, made wuḍū' and performed the ishrāq salāh. After that, he occupied himself in recitation of the Qur'ān for about half an hour. He then began reading Sūrah Yā Sīn. As was his norm, he read it about 13-14 times, and each time he read it, he conveyed its reward by mentioning the name of whoever he intended conveying the reward to.

He then requested that he be given a bath quickly. He was given a shave and taken into the bathroom at 11:30. While entering the bathroom, he asked: "What date of Ramaḍān is this?" he was informed that it was the 22nd fast. After relieving himself, he used a miswāk and performed wuḍū'. He repeatedly asked those who were around him to rush through the process. When he was given a bath, he was made to wear another lūngī (loin cloth) and a warm t-shirt because of the intense cold. He emerged from the bathroom while taking support from his attendants who then began dressing him quickly. When they were about to make him wear his sherwānī (long coat), he said: "The time is very short. Bring the Qur'ān quickly because I have to read Sūrah Kahf." However, after he gauged that the time was very little, he began reading Sūrah Yā Sīn. He must have read for only about half a minute. His head scarf was placed on his head and his blessed body suddenly inclined towards the rear. When his attendants supported him and straightened him, they immediately perceived from his face that he was

visualising the other world. His heart went into shock, and his family members and attendants hastened around him. Each one was terrified. Their eyes were tearing, while this traveller who was tired by his long life journey had reached his destination and was sleeping a sweet sleep. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

It was eventually decided that bearing in mind that this personality spent his entire life in proliferating the Sunnat and the Sharī'ah, his final journey should not be in their contradiction. His burial preparations were made quickly and it was decided to have the janāzah ṣalāh by 'ishā time. Arrangements were made to this end.

A flood of people began arriving from the surrounding areas and far-off regions. A cautious estimate of the number that had arrived by 'ishā time was about 150 000. Family members and a few special attendants bathed Hadrat under the supervision of Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib.

Hadrat's blessed body was taken out about 10pm to be conveyed to its final resting place.

Hadrat's grave was prepared next to the grave of Shāh Hidāyatullāh *rahimahullāh* who was the eldest son of Hadrat Shāh 'Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Many other senior members of this family are buried in this graveyard. Hadrat's body was lowered into the grave after the janāzah ṣalāh. The final duty of placing him inside was fulfilled by Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib, Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Sāhib and others.

That sun of rectitude and guidance which had been illuminating a major portion of the 20th century had finally set. That door of propagation and determination, and rectification and revival through which Allāh's creation had found guidance was now shut.

To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His abundant mercies on him and make Paradise his abode. Āmīn.

We make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to bless this ummat with a scholar, teacher, inviter to Allāh, and man of Allāh of this calibre for the 21st century.

Āmīn.

This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

PERSONALLY HEARD STATEMENTS

I had the opportunity of personally listening to some of Hadrat Maulānā's statements. A few are quoted below. If any error or defect is perceived in any statement, it must be attributed to my memory or deficiency in quoting it; and not to Hadrat.

(1)

In today's times it will be a major achievement if we are able to instil confidence in Islam in the minds of our youth.

Note: This is an indication of Hadrat's awareness of the conditions of his time and his expertise in psychology.

(2)

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to apply strict principles when doing his work. In the beginning, I did not realize the importance of this. However, now that responsibilities have been placed on my shoulders, I am able to value his attitude. A person cannot achieve anything without adhering to principles.

(3)

Mention was made of Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd al-Ghanī Phūlpūrī *rahimahullāh* – a khalifah of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* – on a certain occasion. Hadrat said in this regard: It seems that all the capable people of the era of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* were conveyed by Allāh *ta'ālā* to remain in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*.

Note: I believe that a person of equitable temperament will testify that Dīn and the Sufi way proliferated fully through every khalifah of Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh. This statement of Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Nadwī rahimahullāh demonstrates his absolute justice and equitability. In fact, in this era of fanaticism, it shows that his statement is based on absolute sincerity and honesty. May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him with the best of rewards and may He create many more people like him.

(4)

Hadrat related the following incident in the course of a lecture which he was delivering at Majīdiyyah Islāmīyyah College in Allāhābād:

A shaykh was present in his khānqāh when two of his murīds began fighting with each other right in front of him. Someone commented: “Shaykh Sāhib! How is it that both these persons are your murīds, yet they are fighting right in front of you!? This is highly disrespectful!” The shaykh pointed towards his knees. The person who asked the question could not understand what the shaykh was referring to, so the shaykh explained: “My knees are in pain, and I am unable to complete my spiritual practices (*wazā’if*). The ill-luck of this is causing these two to fight in my presence.”

After relating this incident, Hadrat said: The Muslims are heedless with regard to fulfilling their essential practices and responsibilities. This is why there are problems throughout the world. If the Muslims practise on their religion, it will have a good effect on other nations as well.

Note: Look at the important reality which Hadrat directed our attention to after relating this incident! This was Hadrat's special and distinguishing feature.

(5)

Hadrat attended a session at Daulat Husayn College in Allāhābād. While speaking about the situation in the country he said: Each person wants to derive benefit from the country but no one is worried about its protection. This situation is similar to a cow from whom everyone wants to take milk but no one is bothered about its grass and fodder. Now tell me, what will become of this cow? The same condition prevails in our country. Everyone wants to make a profit from it but no one is bothered about its protection and preservation. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an insightful and admonitory reality Hadrat explained through his example. It ought to be written in gold.

(6)

Hadrat attended a session in Bakhshī Bazaar, Maṣṣūr Park in Allāhābād. He said: When I enter a city, I do not enter it with my eyes closed. Rather, I open my eyes and observe everything. I noticed very few signboards on the shops having signs written in Urdu. I felt very saddened by this and thought to myself that the people of Allāhābād do not have even this much attachment to the Urdu language which would prompt them to have their signboards in the Urdu language.

Note: Hadrat is absolutely correct. There is a dearth of this in Allāhābād and an indication of disinterest in our Urdu language. In fact, I consider it to be a

sign of indifference and absence of a bond with our religion. Most of our religious books are in the Urdu language. If people were attached to Dīn, they would inevitably be attached to the Urdu language. If we look at our Muslim boys and girls today we find that most of them cannot read the Dīnī books which are in the Urdu language. Consequently, they are becoming ignorant of Dīnī knowledge and moving away from Dīn. Also, it is commonly known that our Muslim boys and girls can neither write in Urdu nor read Urdu newspapers. The astonishing thing is that those who are teaching Urdu have their names written in English on their doors, and not in Urdu. Similarly, when a close family member got married, he had the wedding card printed in English and not in Urdu. When I received the card I expressed my severe disapproval. Unfortunately, no one even bothers about the disapproval of the Maulānās today. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

(7)

I went to Takiyah, Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, Rāi Bareilly on one occasion to meet Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. He immediately said: People talk about unity of purpose but do not understand its meaning.

Note: What Hadrat meant was that people commit excesses in this regard. They do not consider the Islamic duties of meeting and interacting. Going to a Sufi shaykh or scholar of Dīn solely to meet him is considered to be against "unity of purpose". This is most certainly inappropriate. In fact, it results in trampling of rights and causes the person to succumb to disrespect. We seek refuge in Allāh.

(8)

There was a tablīghī ijtīmā' in Partābgarh. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* was present, and so was Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. In the course of his talk, Hadrat said: You can understand the nature of the work of da'wat and tablīgh from an example.

A person has a government business under his control. He opens and closes the business at the specified times. If he does this, he will benefit from it, and the buyers will also experience satisfaction and derive benefit. If the businessman does not open the business or does not open it on time, neither will he benefit from it nor his customers. The same can be said about the responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil which Allāh *ta'ālā* placed on the shoulders of this ummat.

If members of this ummat carry out this responsibility in line with the etiquette of the Shari'ah and consideration to the Sunnat, they will benefit and so will others. If not, both will suffer losses.

(9)

When my son, Sa'īd Ahmad, left for Saudi Arabia, Hadrat said to me in a private room of Madrasah Bayt al-Ma'ārif, Allāhābād: You must not go. You may receive the highest salaries there but you will not get an opportunity to serve and work. This is the place to really do work.

LETTERS

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, I continued corresponding with Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* right until the end of his life. I have many of his letters which I preserved. A few are quoted here. These demonstrate Hadrat's love and affection for me. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

(1)

My beloved friend

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa *rahmatullāhi* wa barakātuh

I received your letter which you sent via post when I was leaving Lucknow. I read it in Mumbai. Before this, I had also received your hand-delivered letter. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, I have not forgotten you. The affinity which I perceive with you I perceive with very few friends and pious people. Allāh willing, I will make *du'ā'* for you and request the same for myself from you.

I have [your son] Maulwī Sa'id in mind and – Allāh willing – will continue having him in mind. If an occasion does rise for his academic progress, then – Allāh willing – I will not hesitate in doing whatever I can. By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he as kept up to his name. You must advise him not to be too formal with me, and he must come to Rāi Bareilly whenever he gets an opportunity. I kindly request you to convey my salām to Maulānā Qārī Mubīn Sāhib and Dr. Salāh ad-Dīn Sāhib.

That is all.

Was salām

Abul Hasan 'Alī
From Mumbai
7 January 1975/1395 A.H.

(2)

My beloved friend

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received a hand-delivered letter dated 2nd Rajab via Maulwī Sa’id. You conferred a lot of importance to this insignificant one through your lofty temperament. It is a matter of joy for me by virtue of our affiliation with Hadrat Maulānā *raḥimahullāh* and the right of your love and bond. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable all its stations to be completed, and may it be – to some extent – a source of peace and tranquillity for you. I am really in need of your du‘ā’s. I do not have the provisions and I am empty-handed. Life is passing by in severe conflict and confusion. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable us to cross the ocean [of life] and bless us with His pleasure and love.

I am concerned about the health of our Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāḥib. Convey my salām to him and enquire about his wellbeing on my behalf.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

10/7/1395 A.H./20/7/1975.

(3)

My honourable and distinguished beloved friend

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

It is a strange coincidence that just yesterday I was thinking to myself that I haven’t received a letter from you since quite some time. And now I received it today. I have been suffering with gout for several days, but – all praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā* – I am feeling better at the moment.

I intend travelling by car tomorrow – 17 May – to Partābgarh to visit Haḍrat Maulānā [Muḥammad Aḥmad Partābgarhī]. When you write to Maulwī Sa’id, you must convey my salām to him. I did not know that Maḥbūb Miyā is constantly ill. I am making du‘ā’ and request your du‘ā’s as well.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

16 May 1980

(4)

My beloved friend

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter. It is solely due to your noble character that you overlooked the shortcomings when I was hosting you here. I myself perceived these shortcomings. Having various types of guests makes it difficult to fulfil the rights of all. You are eligible for a lot of respect and honour from me.

I hope my letter must have reached Hadrat Maulānā and the other one to Dr. Salāh ad-Dīn Sāhib. After your departure, Maulwī Sa‘id remained here for a few days and then proceeded to Lucknow. I hope he must have reached Allāhābād by now.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

16 Ramaḍān 1397 A.H

(5)

My beloved friend

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Just a few minutes ago I received *Tadhkirah Muṣlihul Ummat* via ‘Abd ar-Razzāq. I paged through it immediately. By the will of Allāh *ta‘ālā*, it is most comprehensive and inclusive. Allāh willing, I will study it periodically and take benefit from it. Mere acknowledgement of receiving the book is not intended. Allāh willing, my other close associates will also benefit from it.

May Allāh *ta‘ālā* inspire you to carry out many similar works. I have just written a letter addressed to Haḍrat Maulānā on his Partābgarh address. May Allāh restore Maulwī Sa‘īd to complete health. I haven’t met him for some time.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

Jumādā ath-Thānīyah 1408 A.H./1987

(6)

My beloved friend, Janāb Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān
Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I was most pleased at receiving your hand-delivered letter. It was necessary for you to remain in Allāhābād because of your father’s operation. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā* that his operation was successful. Convey my salām to him and accept my congratulations. I am feeling dejected over the ill-health of Haḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable his affectionate shadow to remain for a long time over us. After all, his presence is the only reminder of the pious personalities of the past. I am most saddened by the fact that I cannot come to visit him at present because of the discomfort in my feet, the severity of the season, and a few assemblies which I am committed to in the near future. Convey my salām to him and request for du’ā’s.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

1411 A.H./10 May 1990

(7)

My beloved friend

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter. I periodically enquire about your wellbeing from Maulwī Sultān al-Hudā Sāhib Nadwī. When I asked for him on one occasion, I was informed that he was gone home. He then informed me on his return. And now I have received your letter which brought much joy to me. I have heard that you had to become a target of some opposition and criticisms. This is normally experienced by senior people. You must be courageous, place your trust in Allāh *ta’ālā* and continue with your work. Allāh *ta’ālā* is with those who are sincere and who place their trust in Him.

On the 22nd of November 1991 I was gone on a lengthy journey to Karnataka and returned on 4 December 1991. My health is not good and there is plenty of work. This is why I am resorting to a concise letter. When you write to Maulwī Sa’īd you must convey my salām to him. Also convey my salām to Maulwī Maḥbūb and request him for du‘ā’s.

Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī

1412 A.H./December 1991.

Ḥadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes in another letter:

I have heard certain things. I pray to Allāh *ta’ālā* to keep you firm and steadfast. Place your trust in Allāh *ta’ālā* and continue with your work. Profit and loss are solely in His control.

28/12/1991.

(8)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Ṣāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter together with your gift, *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* volume five. I appreciate your thinking of me and this valuable gift. Allāh willing, I will page through the book. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* enable me to benefit from it.

I had learnt that you were also in London. I was hoping to meet you there. Meeting you in that ocean of darkness would have brought joy and illumination to me. Unfortunately it was not destined. You must continue with this beneficial programme [of going to the U.K.]. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* make it a source of benefit and guidance. Āmīn.

Was salām

Your sincere friend who is in need of your du‘ā’s

Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī

6/4/1415 A.H./9 November 1994

(9)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your hand-delivered letter at the time when I was about to leave for Hyderabad. Even during my stay there, I did not get an opportunity to write to you to thank you for thinking of me.

I think that during your stay in London, I was also there for about a week. However, I could not know where you were staying. I was quite saddened because even in India we have not met since quite some time. I was feeling a void in this regard. Furthermore, I too did not journey to Allāhābād, or else I would have certainly come to meet you.

With regard to the book, what I can say is that I am quite ill at the moment and affected by physical weakness. I have several other tasks to complete and I am due to undertake a few lengthy journeys. I am therefore finding it quite difficult to find the time to write something. If Allāh *ta'ālā* wills, I will acquire this wonderful opportunity. You must certainly complete this work and continue remembering me in your du'ā's.

Was salām

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī

10/6/1416 A.H./7 November 1996

(10)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter dated 6 Dhū al-Qa'dah 1416 A.H. yesterday. I was immensely overjoyed at meeting Maulwī Sa'īd Aḥmad and experienced an affinity and kinship with him. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless him in his life and may he be a source of gratitude and pride from me and you. When he was leaving, he insisted and gave me an envelope. I was occupied with some other work so I left it aside unopened. When I opened it later on, I saw an amount of 1 000 in it. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable him to do things which please Him, and may he be a source of joy and pride for him family and seniors. I am still weak and ill. I need your du'ā's. Convey my salām to your associates and request them for du'ā's.

Was salām

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī

9/11/1416 A.H.

(11)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter dated 10 Shawwāl a few days after it was written. I also received the book which you sent with it. I was overjoyed merely by looking at its title.¹ This topic is most important and deserving of a lot of attention. On this side, my Ramadān preoccupation, the large number of guests and two important deaths in the family kept me very busy. Kindly pardon me if there was any delay in my reply. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable us to meet quickly either in Allāhābād or Lucknow. My health is not too good nowadays.

I request your du‘ā’ for Allāh *ta’ālā* to confer me with good health, strength and the inspiration to do good.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī

19 Shawwāl 1417 A.H./10 March 1996

¹ Reference is made to the book *Tarbīyyat-e-Aulād Kā Islāmī Nizām* which is a concise Urdu translation of *Tarbīyyah al-Aulād Fī al-Islām* (the upbringing of children in Islam) of ‘Allāmah ‘Abdullāh ‘Alwān Shāmī. (Qamar az-Zamān)

(12)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I was quite delayed in reading your letter dated 2 Jumādā ath-Thānī. I was informed verbally about your safe return. I am now even more at ease after reading your letter. I was additionally pleased that my short article appealed to you. The fact of the matter is that it did not do justice to your book. It demonstrates your love and sincerity.

May Allāh *ta’ālā* make the book more and more useful and popularize it. I will be overjoyed if I get the honour of meeting you. It will rekindle the memories of the seniors of the past.

Was salām

I request your du‘ā’s.

Abul Hasan ‘Alī

10/6/1418 A.H./13 October 1997

(13)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Your letter dated 11 Safar was a source of much joy to me. I experience much happiness when I hear about your journeys [for the sake of Dīn]. I also feel positive envy over your courage and inspiration. You must most certainly accept the invitations which you receive from abroad. May Allāh *ta’ālā* convey abundant benefit through you.

Remember me in your du‘ā’s.

Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī
29 June 1998.

(14)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your postcard just 2-3 days ago in which you conveyed the news about the demise of your honourable father which was on 15 Ramaḍān 1419 A.H. Death in this blessed month is in itself a glad tiding and a good omen. May Allāh *ta’ālā* elevate his ranks. Kindly accept my heartfelt condolences and remember me in your du‘ā’s.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī

25 Ramaḍān al-Mubārak 1419 A.H.

(15)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I was pleased and honoured to receive your hand-delivered letter dated 29 Muḥarrām. I myself have not read the book¹ which you made reference to in its entirety and feel ashamed over this. It was published without my knowledge, and without my support and reference. May Allāh *ta'ālā* conceal this oversight and maintain our honour.

You conveyed my salām in the court of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward you for this and elevate your ranks. Kindly accept my thanks and remember me in your du'ā's.

Was salām

Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī

29 Muḥarrām 1420 A.H./17 May 1999.

¹ Reference is made to Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī Akābir Wa Mashāhīr Ummat Kī Nazar Mei which is written by Maulānā Mamshād 'Alī Qāsmī.

(16)

My beloved and honourable friend, Janāb Maulānā
Qamar az-Zamān Ṣāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter dated 1 Ramaḍān al-Mubārak today which is the 6th of Ramaḍān. I was happy to have you think of me. My health is deteriorating. I am finding it difficult to take even two steps without a support. However, I am able to fast. May Allāh *ta’ālā* accept my fasts. I was pleased to hear about your stay in Bharūch. It is hoped that Allāh *ta’ālā* will cause much benefit to spread. Do not forget us in your du‘ā’s. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable you to complete the books which you are working on.

Was salām

Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī

Penned by Maḥmūd Hasan Hasanī

6 Ramaḍān 1420 A.H./1999

Lucknow

This is Mufakkir Islam Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *quddisah sirruhu*’s last letter which he wrote to this insignificant person. May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him with the best of rewards. May Allāh *ta’ālā* illuminate his resting place. Āmīn.

ARTICLES

A few articles from *Takbīr Musalsal* of Dr. Mas'ūd al-Hasan 'Uthmānī Sāhib are first quoted. Hadrat Maulānā's imānī fervour and his passion for propagation can be easily gauged from these articles.

I will seize you by your collar

I can present ten complaints against the government. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* I have no fear in proclaiming the truth before any government of the world. This is because I have nothing to give or receive from any government. However, I consider it wrong to place the entire responsibility on the shoulders of the government. It is against my conscience, knowledge, studies and integrity. When I really have to address the government, I know the language with which to address it and I have the courage within me to do it. However, when you are in front of me, I will seize you by your collar. I am not prepared to accept that we Indian Muslims are so helpless, disabled and disarmed that we cannot provide the means to maintain our children as Muslims in accordance with our creed, our imān and our cultural peculiarities.¹

We have to live as Muslims in every situation

You will have to live as Muslims in this country no matter what the situation. You will not live your lives like animals and birds who are satisfied with receiving their daily stipend. We are not here in this country merely to receive a stipend. We are not

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 11.

prepared to live even in an Arab or purely Muslim country where apart from receiving a stipend we are unable to live as honourable and free people in accordance with our conscience and creed. I am taking an oath in Allāh's name and saying to you that the day you decide that īmān is the most beloved thing to you and you cannot tolerate to have your children to live without īmān, you will find the conditions changing immediately and the mountains of hardships will move from their places.¹

Indian Muslims

By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Indian Muslims are self-responsible with regard to their Islam. They attached their creed, their īmān, their lives and wealth to the eternal and unending religion of Islam and its teachings. They have not aligned themselves to any nation or country, not even to any of the Arab countries.

After placing their trust solely in Allāh *ta'ālā*, they resolved to embrace Islam and Islamic teachings. Allāh willing, we will continue to support Islamic unity and the Sharī'ah of Islam without any reservation. We are not prepared to trade Islamic principles and the Islamic way of life with any nation.²

The true value of Muslim wealth

It is a serious misfortune for a nation and its destiny is sealed if any movement for its protection and

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 11.

² *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 49.

preservation remains a failure or moves very slowly because it does not have the necessary financial resources or its principle members do not have that enthusiasm and verve for action. The person who has faith in Allāh and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* firmly believes that the true value and use of Muslim wealth lies solely in it being of benefit to Islam. If it does not, it is like the treasures of Qārūn – a cause of disgrace and humiliation in this world, and punishment in the Hereafter.¹

This is the true indication of living nations

My respected elders!

The political and educational changes of nations, the collective and mutual relations between nations, the vibrancy of human life, the ups and down of life, indications from incidents, mountains of difficulties, the currents of life – none of these things are not incurable and unchangeable before divine destiny and divine will. Divine help, the devotion of believers, and the fortitude of those who possess conviction have repeatedly caused changes and revolutions. They have changed the courses of life. Vibrant nations do not have anything which is final and eternal. Like a living and vibrant nation, you must strive to take up your position in India, to pave your own path, and strive to make India a free republic which is in line with its constitution and suitable to your conditions and needs. You will have to solve this educational issue through your *īmān*, conviction, determination, decisiveness, proactive attitude and eagerness. If you fulfil these conditions,

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 132.

every difficulty will become easy for you, and every knot will be unravelled.

This is the true indication of vibrant nations in the course of time. Their destinies change by the morning and evening. This is because their life is an epitome of honesty and integrity. Consequently, even divine nature pardons them their shortcomings. By virtue of his self honour, the beauty and power of a perfect man who is aware of his capabilities is as though it is a book, while his conditions are commentaries for that book. How can an intelligent person understand the secret behind my calls!? After all, the planning of madmen is beyond intellect and beyond the senses.¹

We will uphold the responsibility of preserving the constitution

This India is our country and land. We have the same rights over it like any other senior and old city-dweller. No person in India can claim that anyone else enjoys more rights than the other. Whatever rights which can be enjoyed by the President to the most senior Indian leader are our rights as well. We love this country, and we uphold its democracy and constitution. And we safeguard the honour of its constitution. We cannot tolerate any injustice, unprincipled-ness or any conspiracy against this constitution. If, in the entire country, there is not a single person who is not prepared to preserve the

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 204.

constitution, to uphold its honour and to come to its defence; we will fulfil this responsibility and put ourselves in danger for its defence.¹

Ignorance is a major defect and a deprivation

The pages of our history are being torn apart by our own hands or black ink is being poured over them. In this way, a vacuum is being created in the history of India which pervaded several centuries. It is our duty to highlight that era of India and to showcase those achievements. We must demand that in the new system of education and syllabus, together with the historical personalities of the old age, a place must be given to those personalities of the middle ages who are sources of pride for India and worthy of emulation for our youth; and ignorance about them is a major defect and a deprivation on our part.²

Injustice and enmity towards one's own country

An era passed in this country wherein Muslim governance and culture prevailed for about six to seven hundred years. It is a glittering era of Indian culture and progress. Removing it from Indian history will be a great injustice and amounts to enmity towards one's own country. During this period, many feats of progress and development were accomplished from which our country is still deriving benefit and will continue deriving benefit for many centuries to come. There are many relics of that era which are sources of our country's beauty and attraction. During the same era, such personalities

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 206.

² *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 214.

were born which give this country the right to boast about over the entire world and the whole of humanity, and through whom the greatness of this country is established throughout the world.¹

Many children will make claims against their parents on the day of Resurrection

If any person places his child under the new education system, i.e. the one which was initiated in our country after 1947, and he does not make any separate arrangements for his child's Dīnī education and training, and does not make provisions to give his child an antidote for the poison which he is being made to consume [under the new education system], then the parent will come totally and completely under the instruction of the following verse of the Qur'ān:

قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

Save yourselves and your family from the Hell-fire.

In fact, there is another verse of the Qur'ān wherein it is stated that if a person claims: "When did we ever ask our children to become unbelievers!?", then Allāh ta'ālā replies:

رَبَّنَا اطعنا سادتنا وْكبرآءنا فَاَصَلُّونا السَّيِّلا

O our Lord! We obeyed our leaders and seniors, so they led us astray from the straight path.

Now tell me, did they say that you must become unbelievers? Did they say that you must become idolaters? Did they grab them and shove them into

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 270.

the cave of unbelief? This would probably never happen, and it probably never happened in any era. Very rarely will such a thing happen.

Rather, they were negligent towards their children. They made no arrangements for their Dīnī education and training. There will be hundreds and thousands of children who will lay a claim against their parents in the court of Allāh *ta'ālā* and present this case.

They will say: O Allāh! It is not our fault. A very small blame can be levelled against us. We were small children who walked about by holding onto the hands of our parents and elders. We learnt what they taught us. We studied what was instructed to us. We became what they permitted us to become. We were like ordinary clay. We were like soft branches. We were like something which could be moulded in any way they liked. When a clay brick is placed to bake, the number [or writing] which is on the mould becomes embossed on the brick. When it gets baked and is removed, you may ask, "Who embossed this writing on it?" Now look, it was first ordinary soft unbaked clay. When it was placed in a mould, it accepted that marking. Now can we say that it is the fault of the brick?

In the same way, the education which is nowadays imparted in our schools in the primary classes – that entire education includes so many aspects and elements which – if a child accepts them – he cannot remain a Muslim. But can he refuse it? Is knowledge ever imparted so that it is refused by the child? Is knowledge given so that a child may learn it and

forget about it? No one ever thinks this to be good and permissible. No one can ever tolerate this.¹

The foundation of the education system

The condition today is such that the more educated a person is, the more you have to fear him. Today, the entire world is controlled by the educated wolves. They are wolves who remove the garments from the bodies of others so that they can drape them on their own walls. They are wolves who snatch away food from children and orphans so that they can fill the stomachs of their dogs. The foundation of the entire education system of today is built on dishonesty, selfishness, object worship and self worship.²

An eloquent statement

I will present to you a statement which was made by the first caliph, Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. It is a small statement but it is weightier than many lectures and speeches. If I could, I would have it written in bold and attractive writing, distribute it to every house, and highlight it in such a way that every person's gaze falls on it all the time. That statement is:

أَيَنْقُصُ الدِّينُ وَأَنَا حَيٌّ

*A defect must come into Dīn while I am alive!? This can never happen!*³

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, pp. 282-284.

² *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 306

³ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 336.

We can never be prepared to live such a life

We have decided to live in this country. And not for just a few days. Rather, we have pondered over it carefully and decided to live here permanently. Anyway, we are not newcomers to this country. We fulfilled the responsibility of steering and guiding this country in a most beautiful manner for many centuries. We are attached to every atom of this country and we have full right over it. We cannot allow such a cage to be built for us whose mesh is made of gold and we are fed the most delicious foods in utensils made of gold and silver, but we are not free in our thinking and actions, we do not have the freedom to educate our children on their religion and beliefs. We can never be prepared to live such a life.¹

The greatest concern for every Muslim

Hadrat Ya'qūb *'alayhis salām* was on his deathbed. He probably had just a few moments before he could go and meet Allāh *ta'ālā*. He was not at ease at the time. He called for his children and wanted to get a confirmation from them about how they would live their lives after his demise. His soul would have probably not got any peace without this affirmation. The Qur'ān states in this regard:

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ لَا إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنِّي بَعْدِي ط قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا صلى وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Were you present when death approached Ya'qūb? When he asked his sons: "Whom will you worship after me?" They said: "We will worship your Sustainer

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 386.

and the Sustainer of your forefathers, Ibrāhīm, Ismā'īl and Is-hāq - He alone is worshipped and to Him alone we are obedient."

When his sons convinced him that they will follow his way and tread the path of the true Dīn, the weight on his heart was lightened, his soul experienced peace, and his journey to the Hereafter became easy.

The greatest concern which a Muslim has at the time of his death, and the guarantee and satisfaction which he desires is that after he passes away, his children must be his true deputies and representatives. They must be trustees of his religion and culture. His thinking and beliefs must continue. It is a natural emotion for a father to want his son to be his true deputy and representative. Right from Aristotle to the civilized era of today, everyone accepts this right of the father. No one seized this right. The system of the world as it is established today and is coming down through the generations, i.e. the children of Ādam *'alayhis salām* – they are not rebelling against Ādam *'alayhis salām*. This is why it would be a serious injustice to suppress this system.¹

A child also inherits his father's beliefs and thinking

No one has the right to come as a barrier between a father and his son, and to adopt such measures – whether wittingly or unwittingly – which would prevent the child from inheriting from his father. What an injustice this would be that a child can inherit his father's property, but not his belief-

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p.399.

system which is far more valuable than all his wealth and riches!? It is a natural right of every father and his religious duty to be convinced that his creed and beliefs will continue in his children.¹

Striving and working hard – our *modus operandi*

When we appraised the conditions that prevail over India, a weighty burden fell on our minds. Ever since the government took control of the entire system of education, and this view began pervading that a father should not educate his own son, rather it is the government which will educate him, that continuous system which has been coming down through the generations began experiencing dangers. This is what compelled us, our associates and our friends to strive for the religious education of our children. This issue is of fundamental importance in our religious life. We did not initiate this work on the basis of some premise and emotionalism. Neither are there any political points to be scored here. Rather, it is our religious duty and obligation. If we cannot fulfil our obligation, we will be criminals before Allāh *ta'ālā*.²

The lamp of education can burn without oil

The lamp of education can burn without oil. It can remain luminous in the depths of dark clouds and the waves of floodwaters. The history of education teaches us that people of courage and those who were concerned about humanity kept their lamp burning without oil for years on end. They tied rocks

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 399.

² *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 400.

to their bellies, bore continuous hunger and had no buildings, yet they taught in the shade of trees in the jungles, in the bitter cold nights, in the sweltering heat of the midday. From here, they produced great scholars, reformers and teachers. The basis for their astonishing strength of action was that they considered man to be a masterpiece of the Creator.¹

The foundation of the government is on three principles

The foundation of the government was placed on three principles: democracy, secularism and non-extremism. Those who thought of these principles were great thinkers and most concerned about the wellbeing of this country. The fact of the matter is that the continued existence of this country depends on adhering to these three principles. No matter how powerful this country may become militarily, economically or through some propaganda; it will not be able to continue its existence. Divine decree has destined that religions will remain here, nations will remain, civilizations will remain, and cultures will remain. This is what the ancient history of India teaches us. This country will exist with honour, peace, unity and ease as long as these three principles are adhered to. It cannot exist without them. This is why the injurious measures which are being adopted against the Islamic community will harm the country more than it would the Muslims.²

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 516.

² *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 584.

The community cannot be left to the mercy and generosity of time

A community whose life is of such a high standard cannot be subjected to such an education system and cannot be left to the mercy and generosity of time which not only does not have the provisions for its perfection, rather, it is sometimes in conflict with those objectives. The Muslims will have to make the same arrangements for it as they do for their ṣalāh and the fulfilment of other religious obligations in the form of places of worship and masājid, and arrangements for the essentials of life to maintain the bond between the body and the soul. In this regard, they do not wait for any assistance from any government...to this end, Muslims will have to spread a web of morning and evening makātib in such a way that not a single village or residential area is left out.¹

Note: These articles must be studied deeply. In fact, due importance must be given to reading them to one's children and close associates so that the importance of Dīnī knowledge is developed and it prompts us to action. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. (compiler)

¹ *Takbīr Musalsal*, p. 626.

TWO MONTHS IN AMERICA

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib Nadwī had the opportunity of accompanying Hadrat Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* on his journey to America. Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib noted the details of this trip in a simple and pleasant style. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him. Extracts are quoted here.

The Concluding Session of The Conference

Several sessions of the conference were conducted after 8:00am. One session was set aside for 10:00am where guests were given an opportunity to present their impressions. The conference was then set to conclude at 12:00pm with a prayer. We reached the hall at around 10:30 where the session was conducted. In this session, short speeches were delivered by Yūsuf al-A'zam of Jordan, Rashīd 'Isā of Algeria, Yūsuf al-Qardāwī of Qatar, 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Muḥammad Aḥmad of Kuwait, Ustādh Muḥammad al-Mubārak of the Hijāz and other scholars. Yūsuf al-Qardāwī delivered an excellent speech. The speech of Yūsuf al-A'zam was also very balanced. However, in his speech, Rashīd 'Isā completely cut down the importance of Sayyid Qutb and included him in the list of unimportant individuals. At the same time, he accorded extraordinary status to Maulānā Maudūdī and went to extremes in heaping praises on him. This criticism of one person on one hand and extreme elevation of another caused restlessness in the session. The scholar from Riyadh took

permission from the chairperson and responded to this speech.¹

Maulānā's Forthright Speech

This unnecessary environment of criticism, excessiveness, disparagement, injury and unjustified praise which was now more like an interview of students or an examination board weighed down heavily on Hadrat Maulānā. He felt most disturbed and restless. When he got a chance to address the audience, he criticized the entire situation and presented his evaluation.

He said it was most incorrect to adopt an approach of comparison between personalities who were serving Islam. He stressed and said:

Personalities who are in front of us and who are our contemporaries – it is most inappropriate for us to have exaggerated conviction in them or to denigrate them inappropriately. It is most unbecoming of people in the field of propagation to adopt such an attitude. At present, the situation demands us to preserve Islam and make efforts to propagate it, yet we are occupied in glorifying certain personalities and making comparisons between them.

He added:

The personalities whom you praise or denigrate on the basis of their views and opinions have already reverted from those

¹ *Dau Mahīne America Mei*, p. 85.

views and opinions on numerous occasions.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* also related to them the following statement of Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhū*:

من كان منكم مستنًا فليستن بمن قد مات، فإن الحي لا تؤمن عليه الفتنة

If you want to follow someone, follow the one who departed from this world with imān. This is because the one who is alive may well fall into tribulation or will be safeguarded against it.

Hadrat Maulānā added:

A study of the Qur’ān and biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is the safest and most reliable means. We who are working in the field of da‘wat should occupy the masses more in the study of the Qur’ān and the biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* than in the study of the books of latter day scholars. There is no fear of confusion and tribulation in the study of the Qur’ān and biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.

I am most saddened that such a large gathering has been organized, people from distant places have been invited, so much of money has been spent; and yet the outcome of all this is to talk about which thinker is great and which one is not, who is good and who is bad!? We did

not gather here to assess and evaluate contemporary personalities, and to specify what ranks they hold. This is not an examination board which passes and fails people, or which gives a certain time limit to those who are writing the exams.

I repeat: Make the Qur'ān, the Hadīth and the biography of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam your fundamental criteria and capital wealth, and increase your attachment to them. These are the things which will help you in fulfilling your great responsibilities. This country – America – which is thirsty for the Islamic call does not need to know what position is held by which of the contemporary scholars. What it really needs is to take from here a new strength, the sweetness of īmān and the enthusiasm towards good actions. And it must be instilled with a zeal to study the fountainheads of Islam – the Qur'ān, the Hadīth and the biography of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Hadrat Maulānā Rābi' Sāhib then writes:

Hadrat Maulānā's speech was filled with a fervour and effectiveness. The audience too was entranced because the programmes of the conference generally contained academic presentations and historical studies were presented. There was a dearth of fervent and passionate speeches. Just this one speech of Hadrat Maulānā filled this vacuum and created a new movement and heat in the hearts. I feared that this speech may have severe

repercussions and the people may feel offended by his forthrightness. However, bearing in mind that this speech was delivered with sincerity and from an internal emotion, and the crux of its message was to study the Qur’ān and biography of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam – to which no one could possibly object – it had no adverse effects or repercussions. No word of rebuttal was uttered against it and no one tried to defend the previous situation.

Hadrat Maulānā’s Speech at Harvard University

Harvard University is a well-known and highly respected university. Its library contains more than ten million books. It has an excellent and valuable stock of Islamic literature. We reached its Divinity Hall after ‘aṣr. Muddaththir Husayn conducted the meeting and introduced Hadrat Maulānā to the audience. Hadrat Maulānā then delivered his speech.

The meeting commenced with a recitation of the Qur’ān by an Afro-American Muslim who recited Sūrah at-Tīn.

Hadrat Maulānā applied the verses of this sūrah to America and said:

America is also a combination of “the best of forms” and “the lowest of the low”. It is a display of the best of forms as regards its natural, innate, academic and manufacturing skills. It surpasses the entire world in this regard. However, it is “the lowest of the low” as regards its morality and spirituality. While explaining the reason for this, Hadrat Maulānā stated that it was the misfortune of America that Christianity came in its destiny – that Christianity which fell short in steering America in its restless and agitated

temperament, and in developing self-control and balance within it. In fact, it [Christianity] was an obstacle to America's knowledge and progress. After all, it does its utmost to prove that man is a born sinner whose salvation can only be attained through an atonement.

Consequently, Christianity creates self-doubt and despair in man. Because of this, America – like the rest of the Christian world –freed itself from religion and made pure material progress the focus of its efforts. Islam would have been the most appropriate and suitable religion for this country, because it combines religion and this worldly life. It was due to the misfortune of this country and a shortcoming on the part of Muslim propagation that this country remained deprived of Islam.

Hadrat Maulānā went into much detail on this subject, and reminded the Muslim youth and graduates from the East – who were studying at this university in large numbers and who were present for this talk – of their responsibility. He demonstrated to them how they could learn this lesson here, and how they could return to their respective countries and steer their peoples in the right direction.

Hadrat Maulānā's speech was translated into English by Muzzammil Husayn Siddiqī.

Another Heart-Rending Speech

Hadrat Maulānā was scheduled to deliver a speech at 7pm. It was considered to be the key-note speech of the conference. The topic of his speech was: Mutual bonds among those working in the field of Islamic propagation.

Hadrat Maulānā obtained permission from the organizers to speak in general terms and not to be confined to the literal meaning of the title. He presented his speech in Urdu which was then translated into English.

The gist of Hadrat Maulānā's speech was that for the reawakening, supremacy and proliferation of Islam, those who are working and striving towards this end – whether they belong to one organization or different organizations and groups – then love, unity, sincerity and devotion cannot be created through any external or superficial means or through any external moral code. It requires unity of belief and love for the objective which overpowers every type of selfishness and egotism. Hadrat Maulānā presented examples in this regard from the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the history of the Khulafā' Rāshidīn. He then demonstrated how unity of belief and love for the objective are kindled, and what procedures are effective for them. Together with rational and academic proofs, the element which impressed the heart was also contained in his speech. This is why it was listened to with much attention and interest. The audience expressed its approval and impressions several times.

An Address to The Arabs

Before this general lecture, Hadrat Maulānā had delivered a valuable talk to the Arabs after the 'aṣr salāh. His talks since the previous day were all in Urdu. This is why a need was felt to address the Arabs as well. In this speech Hadrat Maulānā stated that the youth of Europe and America ought to have turned to the Arab and Muslim countries for their academic progress and for a study of not only

Islamic sciences but human sciences. He added that those who were to quench the academic thirst ought to have flowed from the West to the East as it had on one occasion in Spain when Spanish Arabs enjoyed academic and intellectual leadership. However, our academic and political decline and western awakening caused the opposite. Now the situation is that the best Muslim and Arab youths are coming in large numbers to European and American universities and centres of learning to complete their studies. This gathering itself bears testimony to what is being said. Nevertheless, the least you can do is to make a critical study of western culture and civilization, be fully aware of its shortfalls, and do not allow your identities to become absorbed by it. When you return to your respective countries, you must apprise those youths who have become intimidated by these sciences and this culture, and who have succumbed to an inferiority complex. You must try to remove this complex from them and inform them that they are mere distant spectators of this culture while you have already dived into its oceans. Furthermore, they must spend their energies and capabilities in serving their countries and steering them correctly.¹

Note: By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, look at the important and useful pieces of advice which Hadrat Maulānā gave to the Arabs. They are worthy of being embossed with gold in the hearts.

The least you can do is to make a critical study of western culture and civilization,

¹ *Dau Mahīne America Mei*, pp. 79-81.

be fully aware of its shortfalls, and do not allow your identities to become absorbed by it... they must spend their energies and capabilities in serving their countries and steering them correctly.

Unfortunately we do not see any visible effect of this. In fact, we not only see the Arabs' intimidation by the culture and civilization of the wretched West, rather their ardent love for it. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. (compiler)

AL-MURTADĀ'

This is a detailed biography of Hadrat Amīr al-Mu'minīn Sayyidunā 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib *radiyallāhu 'anhu* in the light of reliable history books, irrefutable incidents and facts, and a comparative study. Extracts from this book are quoted below:

Hadrat 'Alī – A Mentor and Reformer

Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was not a mere supreme administrative ruler or a conventional caliph as was the case with the Umawī and 'Abbāsī caliphs. Rather, he was a caliph of the Muslims on the pattern of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. He was a ruler, teacher and mentor in the true sense of the words; and he was a man who established a practical example. He supervised moral and religious matters, and took stock of people in this regard. He would observe the inclinations, views and doings of the public to see to what extent they were applying Islamic teachings and the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in their lives; and to what extent they had moved away from these. He would check to what point they accepted and absorbed the culture and civilization of the conquered nations and regions. He would ensure people perform their *ṣalāh*, he would admonish them, teach them the rulings of Islam, and develop an understanding of Dīn within them. He would teach them what Allāh *ta'ālā* expects of Muslims and what He dislikes.

Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* would remain seated in the masjid, people would come to him, seek his

advice in the private matters, if they asked him a religious ruling he would tell it to them, and he would counsel them on their worldly affairs. He would walk around in the market places to check on the businesses and see how they were engaged in buying and selling. He would advise them saying: Fear Allāh *ta'ālā*. Be careful about weighing and measuring in full. Do not cheat people of their rights.

He was most cautious as regards his own self. He never ever gave any consideration to his rank and family lineage. If he had to buy something from the market, he would search for traders who did not know him, and purchase from them. He severely disapproved of a trader showing consideration to him because he was the Amīr al-Mu'minīn. He did his utmost to establish equality among the people with his words, actions and in his assemblies. He demanded the same of those who were under him and those who were employed by him. He expected the same attitude from his governors of the different regions. He was extremely strict in his supervision of his governors. He would occasionally send people unannounced to check how the governors were interacting with the public, and what opinion the people had of the governors. He enjoyed awe among those who were employed by him. If there was a need, he would also resort to reprimanding and scolding them. The letters which he wrote to his governors bear testimony to this approach which he adopted.

Hadrat 'Alī radiyallāhu 'anhu did not restrict himself to taking his governors to account in legal matters only, or in sufficing with only juridical rulings. Rather, he observed their character and mannerisms. If he found that their character and

mannerisms was in contradiction of what was expected of Allāh-fearing governors or against the ways of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and the Khulafā’ Rāshidūn, he would take them to account for it.

In this regard, Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* received information that his governor over Basra, ‘Uthmān ibn Hunayf, was invited to a feast. When he went there, he was accorded special treatment and the Islamic teaching of equality was not applied. When Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* came to know of it, he wrote the following letter to him:

O Ibn Hunayf! I have learnt that some people of Basra invited you to a meal and that you hastened in going there. Various types of food on large platters were presented before you. It did not cross your mind that such people invited you who disregard the poor and needy; and only invite the wealthy. Just think about what you are chewing in feasts of this nature! If it contains any doubtful wealth then do not allow it to go down your throat. When you are certain about the purity of a certain person’s wealth, you may eat of it enthusiastically.

The Excellent Qualities of Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah

Hadrat Mu‘āwiyah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* possessed many excellent qualities from which his love for Islam and Muslims is ascertained. We learn from these qualities that he wanted to maintain the religious identity and used to defend it. In addition to his farsightedness and wisdom in administrative matters, he had the zeal for coming to the defence of

Islam and giving preference to the common good of Muslims if there was a need for it. One achievement of his in this regard is worthy of mention. It demonstrates his lofty character and passion for the defence of Islam. Many historians have recorded this incident. Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* is one of them. He writes:

The Roman king expressed his desire to meet Hadrat Mu'āwiyah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* because his power was posing a threat to the Roman empire, and the Syrian armies had defeated his armies and subjugated them. When the Roman king saw Hadrat Mu'āwiyah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* engaged in a battle against Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, he prepared a large army and came to a nearby country in an effort to win over Hadrat Mu'āwiyah *radiyallāhu 'anhu*.

Hadrat Mu'āwiyah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to him:

By Allāh, if you do not desist and – O you cursed one – if you do not go back to your country, then I together with my cousin ('Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*) will join forces and expel you and your army. We will cause this earth – despite its vastness – to become constrained upon you.

The king was terrified by this and appealed for an end to all hostilities.

One point which we can never disregard is that Hadrat Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* is a distinguished member of the group of Sahābah

radiyallāhu ‘anhum. There are several Ahādīth which make mention of his excellences. Those who criticize him and resort to disparaging him must be mindful of the fact that he is a Ṣaḥābī who also enjoys close family ties [with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam].

A Glimpse at Islamic Society of That Time

These differences which the reader read about and on account of which bloody battles took place – after relating them with much pain and sorrow – we will have to acknowledge one fact and shed light on one aspect. All the battles and differences which took place were confined to the rulers, government officials, leaders and their armies. However, as far as the Islamic society which was established from Makkah and Madīnah to the furthest extent of the Islamic state – that society was still practising on Dīn. It adhered to the compulsory and obligatory duties of Islam. The people of that era still had the enthusiasm to practise on the Sunnat. They were still passionate about implementing whatever was established from the Qur’ān and Sunnat. They had respect for those who were religious, for the Ḥadīth experts, the jurists, and those ‘ulamā’ who issued verdicts and taught rules and regulations. The salient features of Islam enjoyed prominence. Due importance was given to the Friday and other congregational ṣalāhs. No changes whatsoever took place in the performance of ḥajj, its times and its salient aspects. It was fulfilled under the leadership and supervision of a single amīr who was appointed by the caliph. Jihād was continuing with full force. The environment was reverberating with the recitation of the Qur’ān. Hearts were softening by its verses, and eyes shed tears from its recitation. There

was no deviation from Dīn and the injunctions of the Sharī'ah.

Despite its weaknesses and defects, Islamic society surpassed the Christian, Jewish, Magean and Brahman societies of that time as regards its devotion to Allāh *ta'ālā*, submission and humility before Him, fear for the accounting of deeds in the Hereafter, and conviction in life after death. Inclination towards open acts of immorality, evil and iniquity, materialism, attaching more importance to worldly wealth and possessions had not developed in that society. It did not happen that everything had to be weighed solely on the scale of profit and enjoyment. All this was a result of that Book of Allāh which could accept no distortion whatsoever and which could never be discarded. It was a result of the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and discussions about the perfect example of the Prophetic model, the biographies of the Khulafā' Rāshidīn, the lives of the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum*, and from studying, teaching and relating the lives of the martyrs and mujāhidūn. In addition to this, there were in every era personalities who called towards Allāh *ta'ālā*, enjoined good, prohibited evil and ensured that society remained on the Islamic model. Then there were those ascetics who feared Allāh *ta'ālā* and disregarded the attractions of this world. The spiritual authority of Islam constantly remained over the hearts. All this happened because Allāh *ta'ālā* had already destined the continued existence of this Dīn, and this ummat which will invite towards Allāh *ta'ālā* will remain until the day of Resurrection. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

It is We Ourselves who revealed this admonition, and We are its protectors.¹

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

In this way We made you a well-balanced community so that you may be witnesses to people and that the Messenger may be a witness to you.²

The Qur'ān is a guarantee for the continued existence of this ummat because there is no alternative to this Dīn, and because the Muslims of every era fill the vacuum of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā* and waging jihād in His cause. And also because they surpass everyone as regards their creed and their practice. Allāh *ta'ālā* never allowed those of their enemies who are constantly waiting to pounce on them. The Christian power (whose centre was Constantinople) and Christian-inhabited Europe did its utmost to keep the Muslims occupied in their internal battles, take advantage of their political conflicts, and to recapture those lands which had been conquered by the Muslims and which the Christians had seized for many centuries – places like Syria, Egypt and some of the North African countries. However, they could not succeed in this regard and could not impose their political and military force.

The historian, Ibn Jarīr at-Tabarī writes with reference to incidents which occurred in 35 A.H.:

¹ Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 9.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 143.

In this year, the son of Heraclius, Constantine, tried to attack the Muslims with 1 000 ships. Allāh *ta'ālā* inflicted them with a severe storm which caused them all to be drowned with their weaponry. No one could save himself apart from the king and a small group of people with him. When he entered Sicily, a special bath was prepared for him. When he entered it, the people killed him and said: "You sent our people to their death. We are now avenging their death by causing you to experience the same thing."¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent theme which Hadrat Maulānā wrote about! Also look at his balanced view about two senior Sahābah! (compiler)

¹ *Al-Murtaḍā*, p. 328.

FROM THE STORMY OCEAN TO THE SHORE OF SAFETY

A Western traveller by the name of Leopold Weiss undertook a journey of the Arab lands. He undertook a deep and factual study of all that he saw. Divine providence guided him and he was honoured with Islam. He came to be known as Muḥammad Asad.

Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* wrote an introduction to his book titled *Tūfān Se Sāhil Tak*, related some of his life conditions and qualities, and also the incident of how he embraced Islam.

That mind-boggling knot which could not be unravelled by philosophical and scholastic methodologies was unravelled by experience and factualism (which was solely a manifestation of divine guidance and training). The Qur’ān being the speech of Allāh *ta’ālā* and a divine miracle became a glaring fact before Leopold Weiss which needed no further proof and discussion. It was a psychological revolution which took place all of a sudden.

On one of his train journeys, Leopold Weiss noticed a group of affluent and successful businessmen, who also appeared well-fed and healthy. Their clothing and luggage bore testimony to their affluence, economic superiority and good fortune. However, their saddened and dejected faces, and their superficial smiles indicated that some grief was eating at them from within, and that they were caught in a spiritual anxiety which could not be cured even by their affluence and excessive possessions. What, after all, were they lacking? What

was the cause of this spiritual anxiety and pain in the heart? What was the reason for this contradiction in their lives? Why were they suffering the torments of hell despite living in this (earthly) paradise? What was their actual ailment which was eating at them like a weevil? Leopold Weiss probably developed in his heart the desire to solve this complexity and extinguish this fire.

When he returned home, his eyes suddenly fell on the Qur'ān. He begins reading it at random. The Qur'ānic diagnosis for the cause of this "affluent restlessness", the ailment of this class of people, and the illness of this era is the greed to acquire more wealth and riches, and to become more successful. He was astonished and most pleased by this life-changing discovery. He says:

I was perplexed for a moment. I recall this Book shaking in my hand. I then said to my wife: "Look! Listen! Is this not the answer to what we saw in the train at night?"

Yes! It was an absolutely clear answer which put an immediate end to all my doubts. I realized with certainty that this book which is in my hand is indeed the book revealed by God. Although it was given to a human 1300 years ago, it clearly predicts something which was not seen so vividly as it was in our present era. Takāthur or the greed for wealth and riches was found in every era, but not to the extent that it becomes confined to the desire to merely accumulate things or it becomes a toy which does not allow a

person to turn towards any other reality. The acquisition of wealth and authority, and an incurable zeal to invent new things – today must be more than yesterday, and tomorrow must be more than today – is a demon which has taken control of the minds of people. It is causing them to run behind glittering motives which appear attractive from a distance, but disappear like bubbles once they come into one's hand. Eventually that time arrives regarding which the Qur'ān says:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ، لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

*No such thing! If you knew with certainty. You are sure to see hell.*¹

I was now convinced that this Qur'ān was not the result of any human's wisdom and intelligence who lived in a distant past in the Arabian Peninsular. This is because this human – even if he had the intelligence and wisdom of 100 000 intellectuals, sages and wise men, he could not have made this prediction which is a peculiar trait of the 20th century. I found in the Qur'ān a voice which was loftier and deeper than that of Muḥammad (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam).

¹ Sūrah at-Takāthur, 102: 5-6.

The knot was unravelled and there was no need to wait for anything else. Leopold Weiss proceeded to one of his Indian Muslim friends in Berlin, read the shahādat, and became a member of this ummat after adopting the name Muḥammad Asad. He became a member of this ummat whose foundation was laid by this miraculous speech of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and the prophet-hood and teachings of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Muḥammad Asad absorbed his existence and interests into the existence and interests of this ummat, and the issues and worries of this world just as the member of a family absorbs his existence, interests, issues and worries into the existence, interests, issues and worries of his family. He performed the ḥajj and visited Madīnah Munawwarah with much zeal and enthusiasm, and entrenched his spiritual affiliation and bond with this religion. He lived in the Arabian Peninsular as a Muslim does, learnt the Arabic language, and increased his knowledge of Islamic teachings and Islamic society. He established such a deep bond with leaders of this society and enjoyed so much of confidence among them that he fulfilled important roles as a confidant of Sultan Ibn Sa'ūd and an envoy of Imām Sanūsī.

During his stay in India, he wrote a scholarly work titled *Islam at the Crossroads*, which caused a mental shake up in the academic and religious circles of India (Pakistan was not formed as yet). For the first time, he cast aside an apologetic attitude and undertook a confident criticism of Western culture. He proved that there are fundamental differences between the foundations and sources of Islamic culture and Western culture, and that it is

impossible for the two to unite. At the same time, he came with a strong defence of the Sunnat and Hadīth, and proved their importance and need in the Islamic system.

I first met him in Makkah Mu‘azzamah, and for a second time in Damascus and Lebanon where he was supervising the Arabic translation of his well-known book – *The Road to Mecca*. When the translation was published, he was most kind to send me a copy.

For some reason, I did not find within me an urge to study this book. However, when I was on a journey, I got the opportunity of reading it in its entirety and I acknowledged the writer’s psychological acumen, far-sightedness and wisdom in inviting towards Islam. He presented the Islamic call in such a wise manner that this book became an excellent means for Westerners and non-Muslims of India to understand Islam and Islamic culture.

The members of Majlis Tahqīqāt Wa Nashriyāt Islam are honoured to present – for the first time – an Urdu translation of this valuable work. Although the times and situations have changed, this book still has that academic and religious power and value.

Although the conquering and aggressive West has – to a certain extent - overpowered those peculiar traits of the East due to which the East was a place of refuge, peace and tranquillity for the restless and materialist Western souls, the passionate īmān of the Arabs, their simple lifestyle and their desire for solitude, and the beautiful and innocent world which the author presents in most splendid manner – and which attracted him to this natural religion and then caused him to embrace it – has now become

extremely limited. Nonetheless, the consoling and pleasing point in this regard is that the source of that passion and fineness is still preserved. Islam is a world to itself which does not differentiate between East and West, Arab and non-Arab, near and distant, and ancient and modern. Unlike divine attributes, the borders between the East and West and the Arab and non-Arab distinctions were never eternal and unchanging. Allāh's divine scheme constantly caused one to influence and overpower the other, and this will continue. Allāh's divine message and the religion of humanity is not confined to any country or culture. Islam can cast its shade of mercy over the West without the help of the East and without the agency of the Arabs. There is not a single way to reach the station of the true religion. The only thing it needs is a genuine quest and a firm determination. If that affluence of the East and simplicity of the Arabs have been reduced to a dream – which were the factors which attracted Muḥammad Asad to Islam – then there is nothing to grieve about because the source and centre of that peace, tranquillity, conviction and īmān is still preserved. The East is fleeting and so is the West. The peace and tranquillity of the East are fleeting, and the restlessness and anxiety of the West are also fleeting. Whatever is in this world is fleeting, temporary. The only thing that is eternal and everlasting is the being of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The fountainhead of His blessings flows in every era, and His system of guidance is always existent. The Book which He sent for the guidance of mankind, and the person whom He appointed as an example for humanity (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and the lifestyle which he chose – that guidance is present to this day. Those who have a genuine thirst – whether from the East or West,

Arabs or non-Arabs, from China or India – the following call of the unseen is still made to them:

That cloud of mercy is still raining down pearls. The utensil and the utensil room are there with their marks and signs. (i.e. the life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is fully preserved and the one who represents that life as well)

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī
Majlis Tahqīqāt Wa Nashriyāt Islam
Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow
19 Rabī' al-Awwal 1980

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an enlightening theme on the religion of Islam. It ought to be read by every person so that it ignites one's īmān and increases one's confidence and steadfastness on Islam. I was greatly affected when I read this article. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with perfect īmān and tranquillity. Āmīn. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.
(compiler)

A DISTINGUISHED PERSONALITY OF THIS UMMAT

The following is my condolatory speech which I delivered after the tarāwīḥ salāh on 23 Ramaḍān 1420 A.H. at the khānqāh in Kantāriyah, Bharūch, Gujarat. It was delivered when Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was not buried as yet. It was then delivered on the following night and recorded. Maulānā Muḥammad Yūnus Sāḥib ibn Mukarram Qārī Bandah Ilāhī Sāḥib (who is presently residing in Britain) had it transcribed on paper through another 'ālim. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him well. Āmīn.

Subsequently, a few changes and additions were made to this speech which was then published in the periodical *ash-Shāriq*. It is now being included in *Nuqūsh Wa Āthār Mufakkir Islam*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* make it beneficial as He did the articles and written works of Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. Āmīn.

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ مُحَمَّدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ
أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُّضِلِّهِ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ،
وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا
عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ، صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ وَسَلَّم تَسْلِيمًا
كَثِيرًا كَثِيرًا، أَمَّا بَعْدُ!

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الْعُلَمَاءُ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ. (مشكوة)

Dear friends and elders! I think most of you are aware of the fact that a distinguished scholar of the Islamic world, an Allāh-fearing 'ālim and a spiritual master, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī

Miyā Nadwī has departed from this world. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

His demise is most certainly a confirmation of the saying:

مَوْتُ الْعَالِمِ مَوْتُ الْعَالَمِ

The death of an 'ālim is really the death of this world.

I recall Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Sayyid Siddiq Ahmad Sāhib Bāndwī *rahimahullāh* saying on a certain occasion that Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Miyā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* is worthy of being referred to as Amīr al-Mu'minīn (the leader of the believers). Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly combined various types of capabilities in him – academic, practical, conditional, genealogical, in outward and physical appearance, and in beautiful character. In short, Allāh *ta'ālā* combined many praiseworthy qualities in him.

He had a simultaneous bond and connection with all the elders. He went and presented himself before Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. He not only spent time in the company of Shaykh al-Islam Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* but also derived benefit from him. He spent time in the service of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh 'Abd al-Qādir Sāhib Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* and became his khalīfah. On the other side, he would frequently go to the Naqshbandī master of Bhopal, Shāh Ya'qūb Mujaddidī *rahimahullāh* who is popularly known as Nannhe Miyā, and he penned his statements. He also had a special bond with Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He

established a close affinity with Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Ṣāhib rahimahullāh and used to visit him frequently. In short, he maintained a special bond and affiliation with all the seniors of his time.

He was constantly in search of Allāh's pleasure and desirous of His happiness. Consequently, he would go wherever he perceived the fragrance of Allāh's love and present himself at whichever door he felt he would obtain Allāh's pleasure.

The Rank of Allāh's Pleasure

Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh used to say: "Even if I have to go to a thousand doors to acquire Allāh's pleasure, I will go." Do you think Allāh's pleasure and Allāh's happiness are ordinary and insignificant things!?

If we think about it we will conclude that Allāh's pleasure is everything. The station of Allāh's pleasure is the highest from among the stations of sulūk. The erudite scholars say that from among the stations of the Sufis the highest station is that of acquiring Allāh's pleasure. The Ṣahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum enjoyed this station. No matter what condition they had to experience from Allāh, they were pleased with it. And Allāh *ta'ālā* too was pleased with their good deeds and their pure acts of worship. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.

Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh presented himself in the service of the famous commentator of the Qur'ān,

Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Sāhib Lāhorī *rahimahullāh* in order to benefit from the latter. In fact, he was even conferred with khilāfat by him. Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl ibn Muḥammad Yemenī was from Hadrat Maulānā’s early teachers. He was a distinguished scholar and a man of lofty spiritual conditions. Hadrat Maulānā himself relates that when he used to lead them in the fajr ṣalāh, he used to be so overcome by crying that he could not complete the sūrah which he was reading. Hadrat Maulānā spent several years under his tutelage. He studied the Qur’ān under him and read it to him. Hadrat Maulānā was not only impressed by his spiritual condition but absorbed it.

Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed Hadrat Maulānā with special capabilities since infancy. He was still a young boy when he went and presented himself before Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī *rahimahullāh* was informed that Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā was to arrive on a certain day, and he therefore awaited his arrival. When he did arrive at the khānqāh in Thānā Bhawan, he sat in Hadrat Thānwī’s assembly but Hadrat Thānwī did not recognize him. In the course of his assembly, Hadrat Thānwī asked: “Brothers! The brother of Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Sāhib (i.e. Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā) was supposed to come from Lucknow. Has he not arrived as yet?” Hadrat Maulānā then said: “I am here.” Hadrat Maulānā then went forward and embraced Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*.

Hadrat Maulānā was certainly from a Sayyid family. He was a Hasanī and a Husaynī. Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed him with nobility, made him a Sayyid, and conferred him with knowledge and practice. In short, Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed him with many bounties and favours.

This is solely through the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā wrote many books which are most beneficial. His famous work, *Tārīkh Da'wat Wa 'Azīmat*, is in several volumes. It is a most useful and enlightening work which ought to be studied. In addition to containing biographies of the seniors of this ummat, their most informative statements and articles are included. The inclusion of these is a clear proof of Hadrat Maulānā's exceptional knowledge and sound taste.

As I was saying, Allāh *ta'ālā* placed the quest for Allāh's pleasure in Hadrat Maulānā's heart. This is why he went and presented himself before the senior 'ulamā' and Sufis of his time, accorded utmost respect to them and was therefore able to derive their blessings.

Someone asked a senior shaykh: "How many shaykhs do you have?" He replied: "I have just one shaykh with whom I established a special bond and affinity. However, no matter which other shaykh I presented myself to, I went as a submissive person. In this way, I acquired the blessings of all of them. Thus, in reality they are all my shaykhs." Any person who goes to a shaykh seeking Allāh *ta'ālā* and presents himself submissively before him will most certainly receive the blessings of that shaykh. This is because Allāh *ta'ālā* values the person who seeks Him and does not cast him aside. Thus, even if a shaykh does not want to convey his blessings to a genuine seeker, Allāh *ta'ālā* will cause his blessings to be conveyed to the seeker because He knows that he is a genuine seeker. This is irrespective of which spiritual family he belongs to.

Bearing in mind that Hadrat Maulānā was very open-minded and large-hearted, he went and presented himself before every spiritual shaykh – whether the latter was a Chishtī or a Naqshbandī. This is why Allāh *ta’ālā* conveyed blessings to him from every door and every place, and they all loved him. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in a letter to Hadrat Maulānā: “From among all the scholars who visit me frequently, my heart is most probably inclined the most towards you.”

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* went to the khānqāh at Fataḥ Pūr, Tāl Narjā, district Ma’u. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was residing there at the time. In those days it was an arduous journey to go to Fataḥ Pūr Tāl Narjā. Only a genuine seeker would go there. This is why Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* was overjoyed by his arrival and seated him on his own cushion. However, Hadrat Maulānā – due to his absolute respect – got off the cushion after a short while and sat on the straw mat. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* asked him several times to sit on the cushion but Hadrat Maulānā would get off and sit on the straw mat. When Hadrat Maulānā eventually departed, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said to us: “Just look at the respect and manners of Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā! He refused to continue sitting on my cushion.”

My dear friends! It was because of this respect that Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred him with honour, Allāh *ta’ālā* placed admiration for him in the hearts of everyone. In addition to his near and dear ones, strangers and outsiders looked up to him with respect.

It seems as though Allāh *ta'ālā* sent popularity in his favour from the heavens to the earth. The people of this country already honoured him. As for the Arabs, their hearts were filled with esteem for him. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

It is a fact that when a person is humble and unassuming, Allāh *ta'ālā* places honour and respect for him in the hearts of people. Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* says:

I tried my utmost to obliterate my self.
Who is it who popularized me?

The same theme is conveyed by Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* as follows:

The one who obliterates himself becomes
the king of the world.

Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* says:

If you desire your self-respect, opt for
your self-obliteration. This is because
self-respect is a reflection of self-
obliteration.

Self-obliteration does not mean you have to obliterate your excellences. What it means is that you must not consider your excellences to be the fruits of your efforts. Rather, believe them to be gifts from Allāh *ta'ālā*.

It was most probably Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* who asked Hadrat Hakīm Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*: “Hadrat, what is the meaning of self-obliteration? If a person is an ‘ālim, does it mean he must not consider himself to be an ‘ālim? If a person

possesses knowledge, does it mean he must not consider himself to be a man of knowledge? If a person has wealth, he will certainly consider himself to be a man of wealth. So what does self-obliviation mean?” Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat rahimahullāh replied: “The person must not look at his knowledge; he must believe it to be a gift from Allāh *ta’ālā*.” In other words, he must think to himself that Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred this bounty on him without his being eligible for it. When a person realizes that Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred this knowledge to him although he was not eligible for it, will he ever be proud and haughty? Never. Instead, he will understand that just as Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred it to him, He can snatch it away at any time. This will cause him to fear.

O people! You must hand over yourselves to Allāh *ta’ālā*, devote your knowledge for Allāh *ta’ālā* and dedicate your wealth for Allāh *ta’ālā*. In short, everything must be attributed to Allāh *ta’ālā*, and He will become yours.

مَنْ كَانَ لِلَّهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ لَهُ

The one who becomes Allāh’s [true servant], Allāh becomes his.

Just ponder! When a person eats, he says:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنِي وَسَقَانِي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

All praise is due to Allāh who provided me with food and drink, and made me a Muslim.

O Allāh! You fed us and You gave us water to drink. We were not eligible to receive this food and drink. Although we have worked, engaged in business and

did farming; had You not given us, how would we have received this? Together with this, he expresses gratitude over the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with the wealth of Islam. This is also a gift from Allāh *ta'ālā*. We were most certainly not eligible to receive this spiritual bounty.

Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* wrote an Arabic reader for children. It is titled *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah*. In it he has a most eloquent article titled *al-Khubz* (bread). He says that when you eat bread, you must think about where it came from. Allāh *ta'ālā* created the sun for you. The rays and warmth of the sun caused the grain to grow and mature. It was ground into flour which was then made into bread. Now that you have eaten the bread, could you not even have the heart to praise Allāh *ta'ālā* for it!? Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh* wrote this powerful book for the training of children. Arab 'ulamā' wrote their impressions and recommendations on this book and praised it highly.

The background to our special bond with Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was that Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* wanted to teach Arabic literature to his daughters and relatives such as Maulwī Nūr al-Hudā and others. He said to us that we will have to obtain books for this purpose. It was decided to order the books of Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. *Al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah* was ordered and I was appointed to teach it to the students while Hadrat *rahimahullāh* personally began teaching it to his daughters. After some time I was given the responsibility of teachings his daughters as well. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was very happy when he heard that we ordered *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rāshidah*,

began teaching it and included it in our madrasah syllabus; and said that Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* has no fanaticism whatsoever in him. In this way, a special bond developed between Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, and this bond strengthened by the day to the extent that he developed a special bond with us as well. I began visiting him frequently, attended family weddings and funerals, and I would make it a point of going to Takiyah, Rāi Bareilly to spend at least one night of the month of Ramaḍān there.

The greatness and popularity which Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred on Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* needs to be understood by the 'ulamā' and the masses. We learn the effect which Allāh *ta'ālā* places in humility. It was due to Hadrat Maulānā's humbleness and unassuming nature that he became beloved to the elite and masses alike.

Listen! There is no greatness in pride. When a person considers himself to be great, he has no value and respect in the eyes of people. It is an achievement for a person to see himself as small while he is great and respected in the eyes of others. This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi *wa sallam* used to make this du'ā':

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي فِي عَيْنِي صَغِيرًا وَفِي عَيْنِ النَّاسِ كَبِيرًا

O Allāh! Make me small and insignificant in my eyes and great in the eyes of people.

When a person considers himself to be great, he will most certainly fall in the eyes of others.

Look at the seniors! Look at the works they accomplished when they adopted humbleness and discarded egotism. They did academic and practical works. Seniors of this nature were also able to do more works of rectification and training when they obliterated themselves and chose a life of humility.

A senior says: If a person emerges from his house and considers himself to be better than a dog, he will receive no share from this path [of spirituality]. Thus, a person should not consider himself to be better than even a dog. The reason for this is that a dog – in fact all animals – will be turned to soil but we will not. Rather, as per the order of Allāh *ta'ālā*, we will be included in one of two groups:

فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ

In other words, from humans and jinn, one group will be admitted into Paradise and another into the Hell-fire. Now who is there who can say with certainty whether he will go to Hell or Paradise. This is why we have to be forever fearful.

The pious seniors constantly feared matters related to the Hereafter. Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Alī Maungerī *rahimahullāh* was a khalifah of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Faḍl ar-Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh*, the founder of Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’ and a very senior Sufi master of the Naqshbandī order. He undertook many religious and societal works and tasks. Whenever anyone asked him: “How are you feeling?” He would reply: “What are you asking about how I am feeling. I am between hope and fear.” A true believer continues fearing for as long as he does not receive a guarantee that he is to be admitted into Paradise.

Apart from humility, humbleness and self-effacement, there ought to be no place for pride in a believer's heart. After all, what can man ever be boastful of? Can he be boastful of his wealth? Can he vex pride over his knowledge? Can he be proud about his acts of worship? There are countless examples of people of knowledge and worship being destroyed because of pride. Look at Bal'am ibn Bā'ūrā' who was conferred with the Ism-e-A'zam – the greatest name of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Yet he was destroyed because of pride and he was reduced to lolling his tongue like a dog. He vexed his pride against Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām and Allāh *ta'ālā* showed to him the consequences of it in this very world.

Who caused Shaytān to go astray? He appeared to be very knowledgeable, yet Allāh *ta'ālā* reduced him lower than the ignoramus. He was proud of his knowledge. He donned the garment of pride and began making a display of himself in the angelic world. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not like this and therefore disgraced and humiliated him.

There is neither greatness in knowledge alone nor in worship alone. Yes, if a person possesses submission [before Allāh *ta'ālā*] then he has everything. Allāh *ta'ālā* placed many blessings and honour in this quality. There is much rank and greatness in it. A person progresses through it and acquires acceptance in Allāh's court.

As I was saying, Allāh *ta'ālā* placed this quality in Hadrat Maulānā on account of which he was most humble before and respectful of his seniors, and most affectionate and caring towards his juniors. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* placed his greatness and

love for him in the hearts of everyone. We ought to take a lesson and admonition from this.

Dear friends and elders! I am presently relating Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī's excellent qualities and traits because I had a special bond with him. It is my duty and right to relate them and explain them. Hadrat Maulānā himself used to speak about the special and excellent qualities of seniors who passed away, and wrote about them in his books. Hadrat Maulānā therefore enjoys a right over us today, that we consider it our duty to speak about him. This is why I am saying something in this regard. I am also expressing my gratitude to Allāh *ta'ālā* because this is probably the first talk wherein Hadrat Maulānā's qualities and contributions are related. I am saying this because Hadrat Maulānā's family members and close associates are most likely to be still occupied with Hadrat Maulānā's burial arrangements. Where will anyone have the focus and opportunity to speak about him at present!

Hadrat Maulānā's demise is most certainly a tragedy for the Muslim ummat. A major door of blessings has shut down. We make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to protect and safeguard us against calamities and tragedies by virtue of His grace. Āmīn. And that He protects and preserves our madāris and Islamic organizations. Āmīn.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away in 1967. The following year – 1968 – communal riots took place in Allāhābād. Lucknow's famous Dr. Farīdī commented that as long as Hadrat Maulānā was alive, there were no communal riots in Allāhābād. This was due to

Hadrat Maulānā's special blessings. Soon after he left this world, communal riots broke out.

My dear friends and elders! The Ahlullāh are shields against calamities and tragedies. This is why we must constantly make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* that even after they depart from this world, He must continue showering their blessings on us, and protect us against every tribulation. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Look! After the 'aṣr ṣalāh, Mukarram Qārī Muḥammad Kāwī read an article to us from *Rūḥ al-Bayān* of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī *rahimahullāh*. The article made mention of the demise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The verses which Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* had read on this occasion provided a lot of solace to me. It was as though this article was read for me through the grand decree of Allāh *ta'ālā*. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* departed from this world, some people reneged from Islam. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* stood up on his own to wage jihād against them and said in very firm words:

أَيَنْقُضُ الدِّينُ وَأَنَا حَيٌّ

A defect must come into Dīn while I am alive!? This can never happen!

In other words, I will never allow this to happen while I am alive.

Not long ago a meeting on Islamic literature was held at Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. I attended this meeting. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* quoted this statement of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and

explained it in a most impressive style. The gist of it was that every Muslim must have within him this resolution that as long as he is alive, he must not allow any defect to creep into the religion of Islam. We see Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* announcing frankly and fearlessly that if those who had been giving even a small rope as zakāh in the time of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* refuse to give it now, he will wage jihād against them.

On that occasion Hadrat ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* advised him to adopt a softer approach. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* reprimanded him by saying:

أَجَبَارٌ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَخَوَارٍ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ

You were very brave and audacious before the advent of Islam. How is it that you are acting so cowardly now!?

In other words, you ought to be brave and firm in matters of Islam. You ought to have the verve to establish Dīn. In fact, we all must remain firm on Dīn and invite the entire ummat towards it.

On one occasion, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said that just ensuring that imān remains in our youth of today is a boon in itself.

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā *Sāhib rahimahullāh* was certainly a very great personality. This is why the following saying applies to him:

مَوْتُ الْعَالِمِ مَوْتُ الْعَالَمِ

The death of an ‘ālim is really the death of this world.

The world was in need of him but Allāh *ta‘ālā* willed to take him away.

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا أَخَذَ وَلَهُ مَا أُعْطِيَ، إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ، فَيَا حَسْرَتِي

To Allāh alone belongs whatever He gives, and to Him belongs whatever He takes. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. O what grief!

Nonetheless, this need can be fulfilled by Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. There can never be any room for despondency and to think that Allāh *ta'ālā* cannot fulfil this need through someone else. Thus, when a shaykh passes away and some people say that there cannot be another shaykh like him, it demonstrates a defect in their belief and creed. Allāh *ta'ālā* can most certainly bring someone else. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* himself said that the similitude of this ummat is like a rain. We do not know whether the first part of the rain or the latter part will be more beneficial.

Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* said:

لن يصلح آخر هذه الأمة إلا بما صلح به أولها

In other words, the thing which rectified and reformed people of the past and from which they experienced wellbeing, we will have to choose that very same thing. In other words, that same Dīn, the same Qur'ān and the same Sunnat which was adopted by people of the past and through which they were successful. If we do the same, we will also experience wellbeing and success. If not, we will be deprived.

I attended several lectures of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. On one occasion he quoted the following verse:

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ لَا إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي ط قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا ص وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Were you present when death approached Ya'qūb? When he said to his sons: "Whom will you worship after me?" They said: "We will worship your Sustainer and the Sustainer of your forefathers, Ibrāhīm, Ismā'īl and Is-hāq - He alone is worshipped and to Him alone we are obedient."

In this way, Ya'qūb *'alayhis salām* instilled in them that they must remain firm on the religion on which he is leaving them and they must not choose any religion which is different. In other words, remain firm on the religion of your forefathers. After relating this, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said: Brothers! I am saying the same thing to you: remain firm on this religion of Islam. This is my bequest and advice to you. Remain firm on this religion, adhere to it – it is a great bounty.

Just look! By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* those who are steadfast on Dīn are people of honour. They are also honourable in the eyes of people and are looked up to with respect and dignity.

If we embrace the Dīn today, then – inshā Allāh – Allāh *ta'ālā* will place honour for us in the hearts of people. Our shaykh, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to go to a senior medical doctor where you had to follow a numbered queue. I used to be with Hadrat most of the time. The moment the doctor came to know of our arrival, he would emerge from his room, lead Hadrat very respectfully into his examination room, and check him without any hurry. Once he completed his examination, he would accompany

Hadrat and convey him to his vehicle which was parked outside. Hadrat would then say to me: “Look! We have only practised on superficial and outward Dīn, yet this non-Muslim accords so much of respect to us. Imagine if we adopt genuine and real Dīn in our lives, how much more awe and respect Allāh *ta’ālā* will place in their hearts for us!”

There is another point which Hadrat Wālā *rahimahullāh* used to say when the lights used to go off and come back suddenly. He used to say: “In the same way, the light of īmān enters the heart suddenly.” In other words, when a person waits for the light of īmān, the light of the Qur’ān and the light of Allāh-recognition; and he makes du’ā’ for its attainment, then if he does not receive it today, he will certainly get it some time in the future. This is why we must constantly occupy ourselves in its acquisition. Like when we are expecting a certain guest. We will wait for him until his arrival. We will even go outside several times to check whether he has arrived or not. And if he has not, we will worry why he has not arrived. In the same way, the light of īmān and conviction is our guest. It is a certain type of condition which we must certainly hope for. We will have to turn to Allāh *ta’ālā* and focus our hearts towards Him. We will have to make this du’ā’: O Allāh! Just as you blessed us with external īmān and enabled us to utter the shahādah (testimony that Allāh *ta’ālā* is One and that Muḥammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is His Messenger) verbally, place the light and effulgence of this testimony in our hearts. Waiting for the acquisition of this light is a station of īmān on its own, and enjoys a certain rank. Having perfect light of īmān is the highest form of īmān. Waiting for this light in-between is an in-

between level. This has been explained by Hadrat Mullā ‘Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* in *Mirqāt*.

As I was saying, when light used to return after it had gone off, Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad Muḥammad Sāhib Partāb Garhī *rahimahullāh* would certainly say: “In the same way, the light of imān enters the heart suddenly.” From this, he was indicating to us that we must constantly wait for Allāh’s light. If we do, it will certainly come to us at some time or the other. All we have to do is make an application. Hadrat Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* said: If you knock on the door someone will certainly come and peep to see who is knocking – if not after the first knock then certainly after the second or third knock.

Similarly, we have to continue knocking at Allāh’s door, and Allāh *ta’ālā* will definitely turn to us and shower us with His affection. How can a lover remain one if the beloved does not turn to him!? When Allāh *ta’ālā* confers on others, will He not give to those who love Him?! Will he allow them to be deprived? Certainly not.

My dear friends and elders! Our honour and safety lies in choosing Dīn. Our honour and dignity are solely in remaining steadfast on Dīn. This is why our seniors have constantly been advising us in this regard. They have been saying to us: Remain firm on Dīn and Allāh *ta’ālā* will protect you and bless you in every way.

For the ‘ulamā’ to embed confidence in Dīn in the hearts of our youth is a priceless treasure. This is so that apostasy does not reign, they do not have bad thoughts about Islam and they do not become distant from it. The ‘ulamā’ must create a situation in which our young boys and girls remain firm on

Dīn and consider Dīn to be best. This is an immense bounty and treasure.

I was sitting with Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* on one occasion when a person entered and said: “It is my heart’s desire to teach the meanings and translation of the basic primers from the very first day in the maktab. I feel this will be best.” Hadrat Maulānā responded: “You may be right, but let it not happen that whatever is prevailing does not come to an end.” These modernists generally speak in this way. They think that the ‘ulamā’ have done nothing thus far, the maktab is totally useless, and the madrasah is of no benefit. However, if the same work is given over to them, they cannot do anything. Whatever Dīnī work was achieved also goes to waste. Look at all the Muslim schools and colleges. There are not only differences among them, but retrogression. What more can I say? On the other hand, all praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā* that our madāris are progressing and their numbers are increasing by the day. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā* they are all advancing. There is progress in their constructions, and knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnat is also being imparted. The continued survival of Dīn and knowledge is attached to these madāris – whether anyone realizes this or not. Yet these poor fellows level objections against the ‘ulamā’ and ruefully say that they do not include science and other similar subjects in the madāris. Someone should rather ask them: “Why don’t you include Dīn in your schools? You are Muslims, so think to yourself whether science is more necessary or is Dīn more essential? This world can operate with knowledge of science, but it cannot without knowledge of Dīn. Understand this well.

By virtue of that Allāh-conferred gift, Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to write Arabic in a manner and style which used to leave the Arabs astounded. His Arabic appealed to the Arabs. Allāh *ta’ālā* moulded his temperament in a special manner which could take lessons and admonitions from incidents and events.

I recall the killings and bloodshed which took place when Western Pakistan changed to Bangladesh. Everyone knows about it. Subsequently, Hadrat Maulānā delivered a powerful speech in Calcutta. He stated that the condition of Muslims is most surprising because they do not take admonition from events and incidents. When a person hurts his foot, he immediately looks down to see what caused the hurt, and does not allow himself to get hurt again. On the other hand, Muslims are getting hurt again and again but they do not ponder and reflect over what is causing this hurt. It is so sad that we are falling down repeatedly but do not take a lesson and admonition from it.

Hadrat Maulānā’s life was most useful and most beneficial to us. By the will of Allāh *ta’ālā*, he was blessed with a long life and the inspiration to do good deeds. In addition to this, he rendered many academic and religious services. Allāh *ta’ālā* blesses the lives of some people to such an extent that they are able to achieve phenomenal works in a short period of time. I was sitting in his company on one occasion. He said: “Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* adhered to a very strict timetable, this is why he could achieve so much. When we were young, we used to think to ourselves that Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī *rahimahullāh* has many rules and regulations. But when our time came to

work, we realized that no work can be accomplished if we do not abide to a strict time-table. A time-table is essential.” Hadrat Maulānā added: “Allāh *ta’ālā* caused all the capable people of the era of Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* to go to him [and benefit from him].”

To acknowledge and recognize the achievements of one’s contemporaries is not a small matter. Rather it demonstrates absolute integrity, sincerity, justice and equity. This is why Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed Hadrat Maulānā with such a lofty status. He was open-hearted; he was not close-hearted. He was a man of integrity, not of fanaticism. In fact, he acknowledged every pious personality as a pious personality irrespective of which circle he belonged to. Once he considered a certain person to be a pious personality, a man of Allāh *ta’ālā*, a man of Allāh’s love and recognition, and that he could acquire some of the fragrance of Allāh’s love from him; he would go unhesitatingly to that personality and obtain blessings from him.

My dear friends and elders! Many people are deprived of the blessings of the Sufi elders of other circles because of their fanaticism and partisanship. What a terrible loss! Listen! It is possible that the order to which you are affiliated no longer has a man of affinity with Allāh *ta’ālā*. Now from where will you acquire this affinity? This is why we will have to go wherever spiritual treasure and affinity can be acquired. We will have to acquire it from there, and we will have to submit ourselves.

A person said to Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*: “Hadrat! Can a person acquire blessings from two separate Sufi orders?” He replied: “Yes, he certainly

can. However, if you really want to understand this, you will have to go to Allāhābād and sit at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna Rivers. Drink the water of the Ganges from one hand, and the water of the Jumna from the other hand. But you must have the capability to do this. If you do not, you will not be able to benefit from either of the two. But if you have the capability, then you will be able to benefit from not only two but from a thousand. No one can stop the one who is in search of Allāh's blessings.

طُرُقُ اللَّهِ بِعَدَدِ أَنْفَاسِ الْخَلَائِقِ

The paths reaching to Allāh are equal to the number of breaths the creations take.

My dear friends! Sincerity is needed, a genuine quest is required. When a person has a thirst within him, Allāh *ta'ālā* places wells in front of him and He causes springs to gush forth right before him. But if he has no thirst, he will not benefit from the springs which are in front of him.

My dear friends and elders! It was based on those capabilities that Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled Hadrat Maulānā to enjoy a high status among the Arabs. The Arab 'ulamā' acknowledged his greatness, accepted his written works, and would constantly speak in praise of him.

What is the reason for this? It is because together with academic and practical excellences, Allāh *ta'ālā* embellished him with humility, submission and an unassuming nature. In return for this, Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred him with loftiness and greatness. I went to Hadrat Maulānā on a Friday. He was most probably reading Sūrah al-Kahf at the time. He was very

regular with dhikr and tahajjud. He was an ascetic and a man who was content with what Allāh *ta'ālā* decreed for him.

You may have heard that he had received a large amount of money from a certain country. He distributed the entire amount among Dīnī organizations. All thanks to Allāh *ta'ālā*, he had also sent 5 000 rupees each to our Madrasah Bayt al-Ma'ārif and Dār al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmīyyah, Allāhābād. This, despite the fact that he had his own large madrasah – Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' – whose monthly expenses are so high. Despite, this, he did not worry about it and distributed the amount to other madāris. This was also his unique quality because the general trend is that no matter how much money the madrasah administrators receive, they do not bother about other more needy madāris. Except for those whom Allāh *ta'ālā* wills.

What I want to impress on you is that it was because of Hadrat Maulānā's open-heartedness that he used to go to meet the 'ulamā' and Sufis of his era. He wrote about their special qualities and attributes in this *Purāne Chirāgh*. He clearly writes in his discussion on Muṣliḥul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*: "I found a lot of concord in the religious and reformational enthusiasm of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Yes, their fields of work were different, but there was mutual unity in their aspirations and concerns." Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* studied both personalities very deeply. Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled him to utter the truth, this is why he was beloved to all and appreciated by them. This was his relationship with his seniors. He was

also most affectionate towards his juniors. One could not gauge this a lot when he was in Lucknow. However, when anyone went to him in Takiyah, Rāi Bareilly, Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, he used to sort of extinguish himself. Whenever I used to go there and he heard of my arrival, he would call for me immediately. Glory to Allāh! Look at the attention he accorded to me! Look at the amount of love he had for his juniors! No one can really gauge this.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيُوقِّرْ كَبِيرَنَا

The one who does not show mercy to our juniors and does not show respect to our seniors is not of us.

Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh was a true example of according respect and honour to his seniors, and being affectionate towards his juniors. We have to make these Ahādīth our guides, only then can we progress. The example shown to us by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and the way highlighted by him is the way which will convey us to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Essentially what I am saying is Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh was broad-minded, humble and unassuming. Consequently, Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred a very high rank to him. Unfortunately, he has been separated from us now. He has reached Allāh's mercy, but his teachings have been compiled and his books are before us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise on those teachings. Although many major biographical works will be written about him, I conveyed to you what I understood. There are many other points in my heart but it is getting late, so I will suffice with this much.

Finally what I can say is that Allāh *ta'ālā* most certainly made Hadrat Maulānā a man of spiritual affinity. In fact, He made him a conglomeration of the spiritual affiliations of many Sufi masters.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

That is the bounty of Allāh ta'ālā which He confers on whomever He wills.

We make du'ā' that Allāh *ta'ālā* forgives Hadrat Maulānā, gives him a place in Jannatul Firdaus, and confers him with the highest stations. As for the work which remains to be done, we make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to inspire those after Hadrat Maulānā to continue with it. We make du'ā' that all works continue on the basis of unity and harmony. We make special du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to safeguard Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' from the evil eyes of our own people and of outsiders. Āmin.

The Next Day's Lecture¹

Yesterday we spoke a few things about Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. Everyone is grieved and affected by his demise, and we are all saddened by his departure. I phoned not long ago and learnt that my two sons, Maulwī Maḥbūb Aḥmad Nadwī and Qārī Muḥammad 'Ubaydullāh Nadwī went from Allāhābād and attended the funeral. I learnt that Hadrat Maulānā cut his hair, took a bath, wore a *sherwānī* (a long coat) and asked his attendant to bring a Qur'ān so

¹ By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, this talk was also quite lengthy and contained some important themes. For the sake of brevity, all have not been quoted here.

that he could engage in some recitation. He commenced with Sūrah Yā Sīn immediately. By the time he reached the following words, his voice stopped:

فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَأَجْرٍ كَرِيمٍ

Give him glad tidings of forgiveness and a noble reward.

Thereafter the thing [death] which none can defer took place. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Glory to Allāh! What a blessed death! It was a true manifestation of:

طِبْتَ حَيًّا وَمَيِّتًا

You were excellent in life and in death.

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا أَخَذَ وَلَهُ مَا أُعْطِيَ، ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

To Allāh alone belongs whatever He gives, and to Him belongs whatever He takes. This is the bounty of Allāh which He confers on whomever He wills.

The first point [with regard to his final illness] is that acting under the advice and request of his doctors, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* decided to spend the month of Ramaḍān in Nadwah whereas it was always his practice to spend this month in his ancestral home in Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, Takiyah, Rāi Bareilly. And this where he used to observe the i'tikāf in the last ten days of Ramaḍān. All thanks are due to Allāh *ta'ālā* that before I started coming here [in Kantāriyah], I used to spend one night of the last ten nights in Hadrat Maulānā's company. I used to take permission from Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad

Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and present myself there. It is a most serene place. It is from the very same place that Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd Barelwī *rahimahullāh* made preparations for his jihād. Many ‘ulamā’ and Sufi masters had joined him. There is a most simple masjid which is situated on the bank of the Sa’y River. This masjid was constructed by Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid ‘Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. A person experiences intense peace and serenity in this masjid. A person feels a special inclination towards worship and especially in reading the Qur’ān. Many people used to observe i’tikāf in the last ten days of Ramaḍān, and many of Hadrat Maulānā’s associates used to attend. We learnt that it was Hadrat Maulānā’s desire to spend Ramaḍān in Takiyah this year as well. However, it was the doctors’ view that the means to treat him are not available in Takiyah, this is why he ought to stay at Dār al-‘Ulūm Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’. Consequently, this is what he did. He then proceeded to Takiyah Rāi Bareilly on the 20th of Ramaḍān so that if anyone wanted to observe i’tikāf there they could do so.

Now look at the value which Hadrat Maulānā had for his ancestral home, and how much of importance he placed on keeping it inhabited. It was Hadrat Maulānā’s peculiar temperament that the places of the pious elders must be kept inhabited.

Subsequent to the demise of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā came to Allāhābād and he conducted an assembly in which he stressed keeping the place inhabited. When pious elders depart from this world, their places are generally left vacant. This should not be the case. Rather, the work which was being done must continue. The work which was done by the senior,

whether of Dīn, the spiritual path, knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnat, and practising on them must continue. In the same way, the practice of conducting assemblies must not stop. However, merely conducting an assembly is not enough; it must contain spirituality, it must have genuine affiliation with Allāh *ta'ālā*.

As I was saying, Hadrat Maulānā had this unique temperament. Any person of Dīn and piety, and any one having a pain and concern for Dīn in his heart desires the propagation and proliferation of Dīn everywhere, *madāris* must be inhabited, the *khānqāhs* must be populated, there must be groups going out for the sake of *tabligh*, knowledge of Dīn must be conveyed, and the Sunnat must be made common.

We also learnt just now that on Friday morning Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said: "Brother! Today is the farewell Friday. Give me a bath." Someone said: "Hadrat, how is this the farewell Friday? There is still one more Friday [in this month]." He replied: "No. Give me a bath and clip my nails." Thus, he was given a haircut and so on, and he was given a bath.

Look! Do you think those who are the men of Allāh *ta'ālā* and practise on Dīn throughout their lives will forget Dīn in their final moments? Never. Religiosity and piety penetrates their inner core. How can they forget it? This is what is developed when one goes to the pious elders. All these efforts, striving and spiritual exercises are done so that the Dīn which is on the outside goes inside. Once it goes in and enters the heart, it will not end over small and trivial matters. It will remain until the very end.

The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā *rahimahullāh* departed from this world with the daily devotions and excellent qualities which the lofty Dīn had placed him on. Can there be an end better than an end with excellent imān? His journey of life ended in the same manner as it had commenced. He is most definitely eligible for the glad tiding of:

طَبْتَ حَيًّا وَمَيِّتًا

You were excellent in life and in death.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

This is the bounty of Allāh which He confers on whomever He wills.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* was from among the founding members of Jāmi‘ah Islāmīyyah Madīnah Munawwarah (Islamic University of Madīnah). When he was offered a high lecturing post at this university he went to his honourable mother and said: “I have received an offer to a special post at Jāmi‘ah Islāmīyyah in Madīnah Munawwarah. Should I accept?” She replied: “Son! We did not educate you for this.” When he saw that his mother was not happy about it, he did not go. He remained in Nadwah although his early financial condition was not good. Nonetheless, he obeyed his mother. The fruits of this were conferred to him in this world and – Allāh willing – he will be conferred with them in the Hereafter as well.

The more a person practises on Dīn, the closer he will enjoy proximity to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, the deeper his friendship will be with Allāh *ta‘ālā*, and the more piety he will acquire. Hadrat Maulānā’s entire family is a family of Auliya’.

Hadrat Shāh ‘Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was a man who was very strict in his emulation of the Sunnat. When the father of Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* – Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* – went to Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh*, the latter asked him: “Where have you come from?” He replied: “From Dā’irah Shāh ‘Alamullāh, Rāi Bareilly.” When he heard this, he went into a trance-like state and said: “He was undoubtedly ‘alamullāh, he was undoubtedly ‘alamullāh.” (The word ‘alam means a flag). Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* then accorded him a lot of attention and gave him some pieces of advice.

Hadrat Shāh ‘Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was a khalīfah of Hadrat Ādam Bannūrī *rahimahullāh* who in turn was a khalīfah of Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. When Hadrat Shāh ‘Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away, ‘Ālamgīr Aurangzeb *rahimahullāh* had a dream in which he saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* passing away. After a few days he learnt that Hadrat Shāh ‘Alamullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had passed away on the same night of his dream. Glory to Allāh! He was so strict in his emulation of the Sunnat that when he passed away it was as though Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* departed from this world. When a person takes the courage and emulates the Sunnat, Allāh *ta’ālā* inspires him more towards it.

Look! It was your desire for me to come to Kantāriyah and spend Ramadān here, and to observe i’tikāf in the Dār al-‘Ulūm masjid. Allāh *ta’ālā* conveyed me here, he conveyed the seekers and those who had a quest here, and he conveyed those

who wanted to observe i'tikāf. By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, you are engaged in dhikr and Qur'ān recitation. This is solely through Allāh's grace and kindness. Had this not been the case, where would you find anyone having the time to earn Allāh's pleasure, making time for his own rectification, and bearing such difficulties?

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* accomplished phenomenal works at Nadwah. The temperament there was something else. It was through his acumen that he brought it on the path of moderation. It is through Hadrat Maulānā's blessings, teaching and training that in Nadwah a lot of importance is laid on performing salāh with congregation. Most of the students perform salāh with congregation and they are regular with tahajjud salāh. Hadrat Maulānā's close relatives, nephews, etc. are all men of knowledge, piety and righteousness. Allāh willing, they will keep up the work and take care of it.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* once called a few of us and said: "You must constantly make this special du'ā' for me:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَسْأَلُكَ عِیْشَةً نَّفِیَّةً، وَمِیْتَةً سَوِیَّةً، وَمَرَدًا غَیْرَ خِزْیٍ وَلَا فَاضِحٍ.

O Allāh! I ask You for a pure life, a peaceful death, and a passing away which is neither disgraceful nor dishonourable.

We too should make this du'ā' that Allāh *ta'ālā* protects us from a disgraceful and humiliating death. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat's life and death were manifestations of the acceptance of this du'ā'. I also say that Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadwī's life and death were manifestations of the acceptance

of this du'ā', and that he is most eligible for this glad tiding:

طُبْتَ حَيًّا وَمَيِّتًا

You were excellent in life and in death.

فالحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على سيد الأولين والآخرين، وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين.

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING LECTURE BY MUFTĪ TAQĪ 'UTHMĀNĪ

An international symposium in memory of Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was held in Dewsbury, Britain. In addition to the erudite scholars of Britain, many other distinguished and esteemed delegates participated. Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib who was invited as a special guest conducted the opening address. I take the honour of including a major portion of it in this book. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān).

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا وإمامنا وقدوتنا وأسوتنا وحبينا
محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى آله وأصحابه وعلى كل من تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم
الدين، أما بعد!

Honourable 'ulamā', distinguished delegates and respectable brothers!

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

It is an honour for me to be able to attend this gathering which has been organized in memory of our senior elder, a distinguished personality of the Islamic world, and a mentor who is loved by everyone – Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. I congratulate from the depths of my heart the organizers of this symposium, and express my gratitude to them for conferring this honour of inviting me to it. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

Maulānā Nadwī is Beloved to All

Well-appreciated personalities come into this world and depart from it, but there are very few who are manifestations of Allāh's statement:

وَأَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِنِّي

*I endowed you with love from Me.*¹

Whose love is so deeply embedded in every corner of the Islamic world, among every class of people, and in the depths of the heart of every Muslim. Love for such a personality flows in the blood of humans as it does for their most beloved and affectionate father. Personalities of this nature make a very rare appearance on the world stage. When such beloved personalities depart from this world, their departure is not like the departure of ordinary people. Rather, the grief of being separated from them is perceived like the separation of one's close family member. In fact, sometimes the grief is much more.

A Display of Hadrat Maulānā's Adoration

This is also a small manifestation of Hadrat Maulānā's greatness, immense adoration and hearty affiliation in every person that you have been hearing various thoughts and views about Hadrat Maulānā since this morning. The subject matter of each speaker is just one personality, and there are times when points are repeated, yet we do not see anyone moving from his place or becoming restive. In reality, this is a small display of that special gift which Allāh

¹ Sūrah Tāhā, 20: 39.

ta'ālā conferred to Hadrat Maulānā in the form of being beloved to all.

Instead of repeating some of the points which were made before me, I would like to present a few suggestions whose objective is to make this gathering purposeful and meaningful by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

There Should be no Customary Gatherings of Condolences

Nowadays whenever a senior personality passes away, we find gatherings of condolences taking place in his memory. This practice prevails throughout the world. Before me, the honourable Maulānā Salmān Sāhib said that in line with the Hadith:

أَذْكُرُوا مَحَاسِنَ مَوْتَاكُمُ

Remember the excellent qualities of your deceased ones.

It is the duty of every Muslim to speak about his excellent qualities and achievements. This point is correct to a great extent, but the distinguishing teaching of the religion which Allāh *ta'ālā* asked you and I to adhere to, and the religion through which He conferred us with honour, is that we must abstain from adopting a purely customary approach in every department of life. Instead, we must focus on the actual spirit and fundamental objective of an incident or tragedy.

The Tragedy Which Afflicted the Sahābah

There is no tragedy or separation in this world which is more sorrowful and heart-rending than what the Sahābah *radīyallāhu 'anhum* had to endure at the

time when Muḥammad Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam departed from this world. These were those Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum who, had it been possible to delay the death of anyone via the greatest of sacrifices, then every member of this group of Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum would have been ready to give thousands of lives for just one breath of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

The level of the Sahābah’s matchless love for Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was such that when he departed from this world, some of them (e.g. Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu) said that he cannot depart from this world, and if anyone says this, I will chop off his head.

On the other hand, when the following verses of Sūrah an-Naṣr were revealed:

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ، وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا

When Allāh’s help comes and victory [is achieved], and you see people entering Allāh’s religion in droves...

All the Sahābah were thinking about the Conquest of Makkah and its advantages, and were rejoicing over it. Yet, in the entire assembly, just one senior person (Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu) was crying. This is because, from the entire assembly, it was only this one person who fully and correctly understood the meaning and import of these verses. Since Allāh *ta’ālā* has mentioned that people will enter Islam in droves upon droves, it means that the object of Rasūlullāh’s mission has been accomplished and it is time for him to depart from this world. However, when the heart-rending incident of Rasūlullāh’s demise was experienced, Ḥaḍrat Abū

Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* was that one person who stood on the pulpit and addressed the assembly by saying:

من كان منكم يعبد محمداً فإن محمداً قد مات، ومن كان منكم يعبد الله فإن الله حي لا يموت. (صحيح البخاري، كتاب المغازي)

Whoever among you had been worshipping Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam should know that Muḥammad has died. And whoever had been worshipping Allāh should know that Allāh is alive will never die.

There is no need to expound on the grief which encompassed the *Saḥābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum* on the demise of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. After he passed away, then instead of expressing customary condolences and organizing customary gathering for this purpose, each *Saḥābī* understood that it is his responsibility to move forward with the message which Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam brought and the da’wat for which he was commissioned. Consequently, the *Saḥābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum* did not organize any customary gathering. Rather, they fulfilled the responsibility of conveying Rasūlullāh’s message to the furthest extent of the world in an unprecedented manner the like of which has never been seen after them.

I would like to present a few points which I understood through my defective intelligence from the life and teachings of *Ḥaḍrat Maulānā rahimahullāh*. May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable me to explain them to you in a correct manner.

The Reason for Hadrat Maulānā's Comprehensiveness

Maulānā Salmān Sāhib just now explained that Allāh *ta'ālā* had blessed Hadrat Maulānā with a lofty rank of comprehensiveness. Famous personalities of the world have their own specific fields of speciality and action. They remain in a specific field and continue their work in it. Their gaze remains focused on their field of work without looking at other areas of work. On the other hand, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed Hadrat Maulānā with comprehensiveness. In my defective opinion, the fundamental reason for it is that Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled Hadrat Maulānā to be brought up and nurtured in an environment where there was no concept whatsoever of knowledge merely for the sake of knowledge.

The Reason for Blessings in Hadrat Maulānā's Knowledge

Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* with such knowledge in which the soul of knowledge, fear of Allāh, turning to Allāh, humility, simplicity, practice, piety and restless concern for the ummat were all manifested in the most glittering manner. The blessings of Hadrat Maulānā which we see spread throughout the four corners of the world was not solely knowledge of letters and symbols. Rather, its effectiveness and popularity was in reality the result of that pining heart, which, due to crying and beseeching before his Master in the solitudes of the night, and was subsequently conferred to him by Allāh *ta'ālā*. This treasure is acquired by remaining devotedly in the company of the true men of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is why after he studied and acquired all the sciences, he went into the service of senior Sufi

masters like Hadrat Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Sāhib Lāhorī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Husayn Aḥmad Madanī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ‘Abd al-Qādir Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh*¹ for the rectification of his self and internal purification. He used to present himself like a student and would continually derive blessings from them. Consequently, Allāh *ta’ālā* polished his knowledge and caused it to glitter to such an extent that it enlightened the entire world. This is the first lesson we learn from the pure life of Hadrat Maulānā. That is, instead of vexing pride over knowledge of letters and symbols, we have to go to a true man of Allāh *ta’ālā* to learn to strive against the self and for internal rectification. When that man of Allāh *ta’ālā* polishes the heart and confers it with glitter, Allāh *ta’ālā* diffuses its fragrance throughout the world. This is the first lesson which we learnt from Hadrat Maulānā’s life. The fact of the matter is that this is a most useful point, i.e. together with acquiring knowledge, if we do not establish a bond with a man of Allāh *ta’ālā* and do not purify our internal self, there is no blessing in our knowledge.

¹ In like manner, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* would very devotedly and sincerely present himself regularly in the service of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ya’qūb Sāhib Pīr Nannhe Miyā Bhopālī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh*. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Sufism Accompanied With a Vigilant Eye on Issues Facing the Ummat

Sometimes when a person focuses on the essential matter of internal purification – which is also known as *taṣawwuf* and *sulūk* – he goes into solitude in one corner, and his work of propagation and instruction is restricted to a specific circle. Allāh *ta‘ālā* made Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* an imām of *taṣawwuf* and Sufism as well, and he could have turned a blind eye to the issues facing the Muslim nation. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* did not choose such an approach. Pain for the Muslim nation was deeply embedded in his heart. Such a fire was ignited in his heart which compelled him to think and ponder over the path of rectitude and success for the ummat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. As a result of this concern and comprehensiveness, Hadrat Maulānā was constantly focussed on the collective and social issues of the ummat. And the general concept of a shaykh/murīd relationship – its practical application was much wider and more inclusive according to him.

Divisions Among Muslims

Another important and admonitory point in Hadrat Maulānā’s life from which we must take a lesson is that even today, there is no shortage of ‘ulamā’ and research scholars, there are many propagators, many groups inviting to Islam, and each one is doing work in its respective fields. However, the point which needs reflection is that all these works are yielding results in their own circles, and these works are resulting in new fields of work coming forward; each work is producing its new circle. Despite this, the effects of these works are not being reflected

collectively on the nation. Consequently, these works which are carried out in different ways and methods are sometimes becoming the means of the Muslim nation being divided into groups which are at odds. We thus see that where the work of da'wat and tabligh is being done by diverse groups, then instead of mutual working and unity, the mutual disharmony and disunity has reached such a level that it is common for us to hear a person saying: "Such and such person belongs to such and such group", "This man belongs to that organization", "This one is affiliated to that creed", and so on. In this way, the work is being done while we are becoming divided and scattered into different groupings and affiliations. This partisanship has caused the Muslim nation to become divided into disharmonious pieces and chunks.

The Consequence of Making the Paths the Destination

My honourable father, Hadrat Maulānā Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' Sāḥib *rahimahullāh*, explained the reason for this disunity in one of his statements. (My honourable father and Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* met on very few occasions. Nonetheless, whenever Hadrat Maulānā was mentioned, my father would certainly say: "He is inspired by Allāh.")

The very valuable statement which my father used to make is that when many people travel towards a common destination, the destination of all is the same, but the paths leading to it are different. One person follows a certain path, another proceeds on another path, a third person gets lost along the way and adopts a third path. In such a situation, each

person must undoubtedly not abandon the path which he chose, but at the same time he must not curse the other solely for having adopted a different path. He must not ask: "Why have you chosen such and such path?" Since the destination of all is the same, it is not correct to speak ill of anyone merely because his path is different. Today we have chosen different paths, but instead of understanding it to be a path, each one considers it to be the destination. Consequently, if a person chooses a different route and is advancing towards the direction, he is not considered to be our own, he is regarded as a foreigner, curses are levelled against him and he is castigated. Sometimes public objections are made against him. The least which this results in is that fellow-feeling towards him no longer remains in our hearts. This attitude has caused us to become divided into divergent groups, parties and organizations.

Forthrightness Accompanied With Wisdom

The third point is that Allāh *ta'ālā* combined in Hadrat Maulānā the qualities of frankness and forthrightness which were accompanied with wisdom and wellbeing. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with a unique ability to join the two and maintain a balance and equilibrium between them. On one hand a person has to state the truth wherever necessary, and on the other side, the statement of truth must not become a cause of tribulation. This is because stating the truth is a message of admonition, a word of advice, and wishing for the wellbeing and welfare of another; it is not a rock which is flung at someone, it is not a stick which is used to strike another with a view to giving vent to one's anger. Rather, it is an immense responsibility placed by

Allāh *ta'ālā*. Based on this, while no one can allege that Hadrat Maulānā resorted to flattery on any issue related to the Shari'ah and the Islamic nation, when he did say anything to anyone, he said it by getting into the addressees heart. He took the emotions of love, affection and concern; and said it with full sincerity. He did it with the intention that the addressee will accept what he has to say, and if he does not, it must not become a means of mischief and sedition.

Three Essential Prerequisites for Da'wat to be Effective

I just recalled a statement of Shaykh al-Islam Hadrat Maulānā Shabbir Ahmad Sāhib 'Uthmānī *rahimahullāh* which is most beneficial and useful. I experienced a lot of benefit from it. He used to say: "When the truth is stated in the correct manner and with the correct intention, it will never result in any mischief and sedition." However, there are three prerequisites:

- 1) It must be the truth.
- 2) The intention must be correct.
- 3) The manner and approach must be correct.

If stating the truth results in sedition, fighting and disputes, one can conclude that one of the above prerequisites was missing. It was either not the truth or it was the truth but the intention was not correct. For example, something was said with an evil intention, it was said with the intention of aggrandizing one's self and belittling the other. Alternatively, the intention was correct but the manner and approach was not. If the manner was correct, the intention was correct and the point made

was the truth, it would not result in any mischief or evil. It would have its desired effect either immediately or after some time. Now study Hadrat Maulānā's speeches and writings in the light of these etiquette and principles of da'wat and you will probably not find them so salient elsewhere as you would find them in him. Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred him with a special ability and inspiration to write and speak the truth, with the correct intention and in the correct manner. If we were to choose this method in our da'wat, tabligh and other works, then all our mutual disputes will come to an end. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise on this. Āmīn.

How do New Tribulations Come into Existence?

The fourth point which I would like to explain to you in this short time which I have is that a manifestation of the soundness of mind and pure thoughts and views which Allāh *ta'ālā* bestowed to Hadrat Maulānā is that the entire world knows that he came into the present age as a great propagator of Dīn and a grand reformer. If you were to cast a glance at the list of propagators and reformers of the recent past, you will notice that they gushed forth like tempests, they attracted many people to them, subjugated them and made them their die-hards. However, this sudden subjugation resulted in the person moving away from the general body of Muslims and a new sect and a new class coming into existence. You will find many examples of this in the near past where the work of propagation commenced, the work of Islam commenced and it started with a correct intention. Despite this, the reformer formed a group which sang his praises, spoke highly of him and worked towards propagating his ideas. However, the group adopted a methodology

which caused it to be separated from the general body of Muslims and the general body of 'ulamā'. Consequently, the call and views of the reformer became restricted to a certain class which cut itself from the general body of Muslims. Quarrels and clashes began to take place between this specific class and the general body of Muslims. Each one began castigating and insulting the other. Instead of being of benefit to the Muslim nation as a whole, it resulted in disunity, disharmony and disorder.

The fundamental reason for this (and I respectfully request you to pay careful attention to what I am about to say) was that their call became so intertwined with their personal views that they became inseparable from their call. When a person is invited to Islam, it is an invitation towards Islam. It is an invitation towards that Islam as understood by the main body of the Muslim nation. Sometimes a person thinks to himself that the Muslim nation as a whole is erring with regard to a certain issue, so he adopts a view which is different from the vast majority. Although this is harmful in itself – as Maulānā Salmān Sāhib quoted this Hadīth just now:

مَنْ شَدَّ شُذَّىٰ فِي النَّارِ

The one who separates himself [from the main body] shall be separated in the Hell-fire.

If a person holds a view which is different from the vast majority but keeps it to himself, it will not be so damaging and corrupting. But if he makes that viewpoint an inseparable part of his group or organization, opens the doors to debates and arguments, persists on it, and calls to it as is done with unanimously accepted matters of Islam,

severely criticizes and castigates those who oppose him, makes them a target of his disparagement; then it results in the creation of a new sect which has severed itself from the unanimously accepted essentials of Islam. The consequence of taking on the identity of a new sect is that the person himself is deprived of the effects which ought to have taken place through the harmonious message of the da'wat, and deprives his followers as well.

Maulānā Commenced his Journey on the Path of the Unanimous 'Ulamā' Fraternity

May Allāh *ta'ālā* elevate the ranks of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. No one can deny that his name was at the top of the list of those proclaiming the truth in the recent past, and that the call which he made was all-embracing and ground-breaking. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, his call made a deep impression on Arabs and non-Arabs alike. However, in the course of his call, at no stage did Hadrat Maulānā align himself to a view which had shifted from that of the unanimous 'ulamā' fraternity. He always remained aligned to the path of the unanimous 'ulamā' fraternity which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* clarified through his comprehensive statements:

مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَصْحَابِي

The path which I and my Companions are treading.

اتَّبِعِ السَّوَادَ الْأَعْظَمَ

Follow the main body of Muslims.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* held on firmly to this path.

Knowledge of Current Conditions

In the name of needs of the time and modern demands, some people tread a path which is separate from the majority 'ulamā'. They do not tire in criticizing the 'ulamā' and saying: "These Maulwis are not aware of the demands and needs of the time." No one can level such a criticism against Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. No one can say that he was not aware of the current conditions or of the demands of the time. Despite this, in no task of his did he ever choose a path which was different from the collective path of the majority of the Muslim nation.

In What Type of Issues Does the Obligation of Da'wat Apply

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* wrote this point and my honourable father used to say it again and again (it is something to remember), viz. the obligation of enjoining good and forbidding evil does not apply to matters of ijtihād. The responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil only applies in unanimously agreed upon issues and the accepted matters of Dīn. Thus, if in a matter of ijtihād, a person follows the other path, it is most certainly not the demand of propagation to castigate or criticize him. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* never made such a thing his objective. Now look at how much benefit Allāh *ta'ālā* conveyed to the people through his da'wat because of this approach.

The Natural Cause of Differing Views and Their Limits

My final presentation is about Hadrat Maulānā's attitude towards differing views. All praise is due to

Allāh *ta'ālā* this has been made known to us. The faces of two people are naturally not the same, their temperaments are not the same and their understanding is also not the same. Thus, as long as the forms of understanding will differ, differing views will exist. Thus, there are differences in every department of life. However, there are different categories of differences, and there are certain limits for them as well. One difference is between Islam and unbelief, or truth and falsehood. Another is the one which exists in subsidiary matters and in *ijtihād*. Another comes up in creedal matters. If you go one step further, differences manifest themselves solely on the basis of differences in temperament and inclinations. In this way, we see many types and levels of differences. However, we very often see that differences are measured by the same yardstick without any consideration to the various levels of differences. We then want to strike every type of difference with the same stick.

For example, even in the case of an *ijtihādī* difference, such a powerful and strong refutation is expressed as it is done against a difference of unbelief and falsehood. In fact, a fanatical approach is adopted even on differences which are due to differences in temperament and inclination. Disregard for the different levels results in fights, disputes, arguments and mischief-mongering. While Allāh *ta'ālā* has allowed many differences, He also laid down separate methods and processes for the handling of each difference. The methodology of Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* in approaching these differences was to bear in mind its etiquette and limits, on the basis of the instruction:

تَعَاوُنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

Help each other on the basis of goodness and righteousness.

Flattery is Not Permissible

This certainly does not mean that a person becomes so accommodating that he resorts to flattery and adulation even in matters of absolute kufr and glaring falsehood, or he becomes intimidated by the criticism of people and abstains from proclaiming falsehood to be falsehood. For example, the ‘ulamā’ who are on the true path are sometimes criticized of constantly moving around with a fatwā of kufr. Now to be intimidated by this accusation and therefore abstain from labelling a collective and clear act of kufr as such will certainly be flattery. Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh was never intimidated by matters of this nature, and he did not adopt an apologetic and adulatory response in the battle between kufr and Islam. Thus, we see him writing an entire book on Qādiyānism and forthrightly exposing their kufr.

However, when it came to differences in subsidiary issues, Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh did not issue any verdict which could become a cause of dissension. His relationship with everyone was maintained while observing the collective and religious benefit of the entire Muslim ummat. He continued practising the following instruction with full sincerity and devotion:

تَعَاوُنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَعَاوُنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Help each other on the basis of goodness and righteousness, and do not help each other in sin and enmity.

Cooperating With Outsiders in Good Works

An example of mutual cooperation in good works and common objectives despite differing views can be found in the life of Hadrat 'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. When the rebel forces had laid siege to him and went to the extent of refusing him access to water, and were on the verge of assassinating him, someone asked him: "Hadrat! Those rebels have taken control of Masjid-e-Nabawī. Should we perform ṣalāh behind them?" This question is being posed at a time when those people were imposing unthinkable oppressions on him and were rebelling fiercely against him. Even on this occasion, Hadrat 'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

إِنْ أَحْسَنُوا فَأَحْسِنْ مَعَهُمْ، وَإِنْ أَسَاءُوا فَاجْتَنِبْ إِسَاءَتَهُمْ

If they do good works, you too must do good with them. If they commit evil, you must safeguard yourselves from their evil.

Even at a time when the rebels were thirsty for his blood, this unprejudiced statement issues from the tongue of this righteous caliph. When he issued this instruction with regard to such rebels, how can it be correct for us to distribute ourselves into factions over minor differences or subsidiary issues!?

The following attitude has spread in our society: I can no longer speak to him, I can no longer meet him, I cannot engage in any discussion with him, I refuse to attend an assembly in which he is present...this has broken us into tiny bits, it has

dismantled the management of the entire ummat, and it has shut off the path to the ummat's rectification and success. Consequently, although we are so powerful in number, we have become morsels to be eaten by our enemies, and our massive collective force has been reduced to:

هَبَاءٌ مَّنْثُورًا

Scattered dust.

The only way to save ourselves from this helpless situation and the pitiable condition of the ummat is to adopt the approach of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh. May Allāh ta'ālā enable and inspire us to adopt this path. I acknowledge taking up more than the time which was allocated to me, but I felt if an assembly is held in memory of Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh and these qualities of his are not mentioned, then that assembly will remain incomplete. If we want to benefit from his wholesome life, we will have to make these important points the amulets of our life. May Allāh ta'ālā enable us to practise on these important points and inspire us to advance the mission of Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh. Āmīn.

Our final supplication is that all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the universe.

EXTRACTS FROM: NABĪ-E-RAḤMAT

Māshā Allāh, this book of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* is well-researched and excellently referenced. It too has spread throughout the Arab and non-Arab worlds, received with approval and accepted with both hands. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* wrote it in Arabic, it was translated into Urdu by Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad al-Hasanī *rahimahullāh* and has been translated into several other languages including English. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, its printing and distribution continues to this day.

In the beginning of the book, the ignorance, misguidance, moral degeneration and stories of human destruction of the Arabs and other nations are presented in a scholarly manner. They are most enlightening and it is essential for every person to know them so that it becomes easy to understand the peculiarities and specialities of the rectificational efforts of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and the excellence and extent of his system of education and training. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes as follows in his foreword. Read it carefully:

At the time of penning this biography, the author cannot disregard and ignore that environment in which the sun of prophethood rose for the first time. This is because it is necessary for us to present a picture of the universal ignorance of that era which we see pervading the entire

world in the sixth century. It will also be necessary to show the level of corruption, moral degeneration and human restlessness and anxiety the world had reached. What was its moral, social, economic and political condition? What were the causes and factors for the destruction and corruption which were pervading the world at that time? What oppressive governments, distorted religions, extremist and imaginary philosophies, destructive movements and creeds were working at the time? When the author tried to present a slightly detailed picture of the era of ignorance in the introduction to his book, *Mādhā Khasara al-'Ālam bi Inhitāt al-Muslimīn*, he had to face severe difficulties which he remembers to this day. He had to assess all those Western sources in which the history of the civilized nations and peoples which were existing at the time of the appearance of Islam was detailed. He collated the scattered descriptions from all those voluminous books just as grains of sugar are collected from the mouths of ants.

This prelude which is written in somewhat detail and sheds light for the person studying the sīrah, and presents a total picture before him of the greatness and expansiveness of the commissioning of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the distinction and importance of the mantle of prophet-hood, and its

outstanding results is most essential for the contemporary sīrah writer. His work will be considered incomplete as long as he does not opt for this method of research and investigation, and does not present a living and vibrant picture of the ignorance at the time when Islam began, the corruption and anxiety which prevailed, its moral degeneration and its self-destructing and suicidal nature.

This was the scene in that society and city where Islam's first light glittered, where the blessed birth of Muḥammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam took place, where the caravan of inviting towards the truth took its first step, where he spent 53 years of his blessed life, and where he had to experience 13 arduous years in calling towards Islam. A person studying the sīrah has to be fully aware of the level of the mind, perceptions, culture and civilization of that time. He also has to know the social, political and religious conditions of that country, its economic and political structures, and the nature of its military strength. He has to know all this so that he can correctly understand the true inclinations of the inhabitants of that land, their temperaments and nature, and their minds and thinking processes. He must be able to gauge those hardships and obstacles which were coming as barriers to Islam's progress and growth.

The same point – in fact, a bit more – can be said about Madīnah to where Islam shifted, to where Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum emigrated, and divine decree made it the first centre of Islam. Without an understanding of this background, a full appreciation of Islam’s successes and achievements will not be possible. Without knowledge of these conditions, we just cannot understand with what and how Islam trained these individuals, how it kindled a new life in them, how it solved conflicting issues, how it convinced opposing elements, and what the achievement of the prophethood of Muḥammad sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was in this regard. How did it join the broken hearts and the offended humanity? How did it carry out the obligation of their education, training and purification. All this can only be understood when a person has before him a full picture of this strange and complex society which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum had to encounter. There are many incidents and decisions which a person comes across in his study of Hadīth and sīrah literature. These can never be fully comprehended if a person does not have knowledge of the socio-economic and political condition of that time, the peculiarities of that land, its geography, its near and surrounding

regions, its individual and regional powers, their mutual relationships and bonds, promises and covenants, dealings before emigration, and the national and regional protocols, customs and habits. If a person becomes totally ignorant of all these points and commences his journey by studying the books of *sīrah*, his example will be like a person who commences his journey while having no idea whatsoever of what is happening to his right and left, the commencement of his journey and his destination.

The same principles apply to the contemporary governments and neighbouring states of the time. A true and clear picture of the importance of the venturesome Islamic call, its spiritedness and daringness cannot be truly realized until the vastness, strength and authority of those governments are not known – those governments which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* invited to Islam and to whom he wrote letters. And as long as true knowledge of their culture and civilization, military power, free living, affluence, absolute and undisputed authority of their kings, their awe and the terror which they instilled is not ascertained. Modern research has shed sufficient light on the history and society of those kingdoms and nations. Many facts about them which were previously unknown by ancient peoples or were unclear have now been exposed. It will be

necessary for a person writing on the *sīrah* today to resort to all these facts and information, and to make full use of the new researches which have come to the fore in the fields of history, geography and comparative studies.¹

Note: By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* made full use of modern researches and facts. This is clearly visible in the course of reading this book.

The Era of Ignorance

A Glimpse at Religions of the Sixth Century

In the sixth century of the Christian era, the major religions of the world, ancient religious scriptures and their rules and regulations (which had played their specific roles on the fields of religion, morals and knowledge) had become toys to play around with. They had succumbed to the proponents of distortion, hypocrites, and the selfish motives of godless and heartless religious leaders. They had become so prone to the events of time, that it not only became difficult to recognize their original form, but almost impossible. If their original founders and proponents and their Prophets were to come back and see this condition, they would not be able to recognize those religions themselves, and they would

¹ *Nabī-e-Rahmat*, p. 52.

never be ready to have them attributed to them.

Judaism was the name of a few lifeless customs and traditions in which there was no spark of life. In addition to this, Judaism is in itself an inherited religion which has no message for the world, no invitation to the nations of the world, and no remedy for the ailing humanity.

This religion could not even remain firm on its creed in the oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā* (a creed which had been its distinguishing feature among various religions and nations, in which was its honour and nobility, the secret to the superiority which the Banī Isrā'īl enjoyed over other nations in the ancient past, and which was bequeathed by Hadrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* and Hadrat Ya'qūb *'alayhis salām* to their children). The Jews accepted many beliefs from their neighbouring communities or through pressures from conquering nations, and they adopted many of their ways, and their polytheistic, idolatrous and ignorant traditions.

Christianity had succumbed to the distortions of extremists, rationalizations of ignoramuses and the idolatry of Roman Christians from the very beginning. The simple and pure teachings of Hadrat 'Īsā *'alayhis salām* was buried under this medley. Together with tauhīd and devotion, the effulgence of Allāh's worship

had become concealed behind dense clouds.

An Overview of Nations and Countries of the World

This was the condition of those religions which had come in their respective times to invite towards Allāh *ta'ālā*. As for the civilized nations where glorious governments were established, where there was a proliferation of knowledge and the sciences, and which were considered to be the centres of culture, civilization, craftsmanship and the sciences – there the religions were completely distorted, and they had lost their original reality, value, strength and usefulness. Reformers and teachers of morality were rarely found.

The Eastern Roman Empire

There was such a heavy imposition of taxes in the Eastern Roman Empire that its own citizens began giving preference to foreign rule. Revolutions and rebellions were the order of the day. During a single riot in 533 C.E., 30 000 people were killed in Constantinople. Their greatest preoccupation and interest was in acquiring wealth in whichever way possible, and then to spend it in enjoyment. They became so immersed in licentious living that they bordered on the limits of animalistic and barbaric behaviour.

Egypt

Egypt which was a province of the wealthy Byzantine Empire was prone to religious intolerance and terrifying political insurgency. The Levant which was another province of the Byzantine Empire had to submit to the expansionist and colonial interests of the Romans where, solely through brute force, the local populace was ruled as though they were foreigners who never deserved any love and affection.

The Persian Empire

Tayfūn (al-Madā'in) which was the capital of this kingdom was at its last point as regards its civilization, progress, and licentious and extravagant lifestyle. The absolute corruption and permissiveness which it called towards resulted in a situation where people would barge into any house they wanted, and forcefully take away the wealth, possessions and women from there.

All the sources of wealth and income of the country were considered to be the personal property of the kings. On the other hand, the poor masses were living in abject poverty and miserable conditions, and were complaining about their lot. They had to toil and slog merely to survive. Various types of taxes, restrictions and shackles had made their lives a torment, and they were living their lives like animals. When they became fed

up with these miseries and could no longer tolerate the taxes and compulsory military duties, many farmers bid farewell to their farms and sought refuge in the monasteries of monks. In the protracted and bloody wars between the Sasanid Empire and the Western Byzantine Empire (which took place periodically and in which there was neither any benefit for the masses nor did they have any interest in them), these masses were used like trivial fuel [to stoke the fires of war].

India

In the ancient world, India had developed for itself a grand name in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, medicine and philosophy. The general view of historians is that its darkest and worst religious, moral and social period commences from the beginning of the sixth century of the Christian era. Even their places of worship were not free from shamelessness and licentiousness. These acts were not considered to be abnormal because religion had accorded them a sanctified colour. Women had no value, honour and protection. A man could lose his wife in gambling, when her husband died, she was like the living dead – she could neither remarry nor was she viewed with honour and dignity. When the husband

died, the woman committing *satti*¹ was a practice in the upper class and affluent families. The purpose of this practice was to demonstrate loyalty, and a way of escaping from shame and humiliation. This appalling practice could only come to an end after British rule.

The entire country was a target of disharmony, and was breaking up into bits and pieces. It contained thousands of fiefdoms and minor governments which were at constant conflict. Insecurity, maladministration, disregard from the masses, and oppression and tyranny were the order of the day.

Furthermore, this country had cut itself off from the rest of the world. Stagnation pervaded it. It had subjected itself to the vile trap of customs and traditions, class distinction and conflict, and inequality. Blood was openly shed on the basis of genealogical and class fanaticism. A Hindu historian, Vidya Dhar Mahajan, formerly a professor of history at Punjab University College, writes about the state of affairs in India before the arrival of Islam:

The people of India were living in isolation from the rest of the world. They were so much contented with themselves that

¹ A woman who burns herself on the funeral pier of her husband as a show of loyalty.

they did not bother about what was happening outside their frontiers. Their ignorance of the developments outside their country put them in a very weak position. It also created a sense of stagnation among them. There was decay on all sides. There was not much life in the literature of the period. Architecture, painting and fine arts were also adversely affected. Indian society had become static and caste system had become very frigid. There was no remarriage of widows and restrictions with regard to food and drink became very rigid. The untouchables were forced to live outside the towns.¹

The Arabian Peninsular

The Arabs too had degenerated morally. They were addicted to alcohol and gambling. Their hard-heartedness and blind adherence to ignorant customs can be gauged from the fact that they used to bury their daughters alive. Highway robbery and killing innocents were their beloved occupations. Women enjoyed no honour and dignity whatsoever. They were treated like other possessions in the house, moved around like cattle or received as inheritance. Certain foods were reserved for men; women could not consume them. A man could marry as many women as he wanted. Some people

¹ Vidya Dhar Mahajan: *Muslim Rule in India*, Delhi, 1970, p. 33.

used to kill their children out of financial stress and the fear of bankruptcy.

Tribal, genealogical, and family solidarity were deeply embedded in them. Going into battle was second nature and it was like play and amusement to kill each other. In most cases, a trivial incident would result in bloody and protracted wars. Some wars extended for as long as 40 years, and thousands of people lost their lives in the process.

Europe

The European nations which were settled in the North and West were living in the terrifying clouds of ignorance and illiteracy, and immersed in bloody wars. They were far behind the civilized nations, and very distant from the world of arts and sciences. They had no contact with the outside world, nor did the outside world have any interest in them. Their bodies were filthy while their minds were filled with superstitions and false notions. They paid the least importance to cleanliness and would use the least amount of water possible. Their priests and monks would self-inflict bodily pain, were extreme in living in solitude and in fleeing from human contact. They were still not agreed upon whether women were humans or animals, whether they possessed eternal souls or not, and if they had a right to ownership, buying and selling or not.

Europe was immersed in pitch darkness from the fifth to tenth centuries, which was gradually becoming darker and more terrifying. It was like the corpse of a large civilization which had become decomposed. Signs of that civilization were getting wiped out, and it was now stamped with the seal of collapse. Those countries such as Italy and France where civilization had reached its peak in ancient times were reduced to ruin and squalor.

Universal Gloom

In short, at the time when Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was commissioned as a Prophet, the entire humanity was heading speedily on the path of self-destruction. Man had forgotten his Creator and Master. He disregarded his own self, his future and his destiny. He did not even have the ability within himself to distinguish between right and wrong, vice and virtue. It seemed as though the minds and hearts of humans are lost in something, they do not even have the time to raise their heads and look towards religion and the Hereafter. And they do not have a single moment to see to the nourishment of the soul and heart, success in the Hereafter, service to humanity and rectification of their condition. At times, you will not come across a single person in an entire country who had some concern for religion, who was worshipping

Allāh alone, without ascribing any partner to Him, whose heart was filled with pain for humanity, and who was restless at humanity's dark and terrifying end. This condition is distinctly portrayed in the followed words of Allāh *ta'ālā*:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ
الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ.

Corruption has spread on the land and in the sea on account of what the peoples' hands have earned. [Thus] He ought to make them taste the consequence of their doings, so that they might return.¹

The Darkest Era of the Arabs

Despite the capabilities and excellent qualities which Allāh *ta'ālā* had conferred on the Arabs, and on account of which they were selected for the commissioning of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the appearance of Islam, no signs of wakefulness, vigilance and restlessness could be seen in the Arabian Peninsular. There were just a few individuals who were searching for the truth. These could be counted on the fingers, and were no more than fire-flies on a dark, rainy and stormy night which can neither show the way to a lost person nor provide any heat and warmth.

¹ Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 41.

This era in which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was commissioned was most certainly the darkest era in the history of the Arabs. They were on the lowest ebb of darkness and degeneration – a time when hopes of reformation are dashed. This was a most difficult, arduous and serious phase which must have presented itself before any Prophet in the path of propagation.

A British writer, M.R. William Muir, is notorious for his criticism and denigration of Islam and Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He presents a beautiful picture of that era and refutes the view of certain Western authors who claimed that the lava in the volcano had reached boiling point just before the Prophet's commissioning; all that he did was he arrived at the right time and at the right place, saw the fire and the lava spewed forth. He writes:

“During the youth of Mahomet, this aspect of the Peninsula was strongly conservative; perhaps it was never at any period more hopeless.”¹

The Need for a Prophet

The conditions had deteriorated to such an extent in the middle of the sixth century and humanity had fallen to such

¹ Sir William Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, vol. 1, London, 1858, p. 238

a pitiful ebb that it was no longer the field for a reformer and character builder. The issue was not one of correcting a certain belief, changing a specific custom, propagating a method of worship or the societal rectification of a community. For all this, those reformers and teachers were enough who were always available in some era and region. The issue here was how to remove and cleanse that polytheistic, idolatrous and destructive crust which had been accumulating and hardening for centuries, and beneath which, the correct teachings of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* and efforts and services of reformers were buried. And then – in its place – how to construct that new, firm, grand, wide and lofty building in whose shade the entire human race can find refuge. The issue was how to create that human who was different from his predecessor in every aspect, and is seen as though he just came into existence and has a received new life just now.

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ
مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا.

Can he who was dead and to whom We gave life thereafter, and gave him a light whereby he walks among people – [can he be] equal to the one whose condition is that

*he is lying in the pits of darkness from which he cannot emerge?*¹

In order to put an end to the root of this evil, utterly uproot the seed of idolatry in a manner that its effect and influence do not remain even in distant places, and to embed and implant the belief in the oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā* in the heart so deeply that it is difficult to imagine anything more than that, to develop within it the inclination to obtain Allāh's pleasure and worship Him, to have the desire to serve humanity and stand for the truth, to have the ability to reign in every wrong desire and yearning, and to develop its capabilities. In short, the humanity which was on the verge of self-destruction and for which it had left no stone unturned, had to be held and rescued from the hell of this world and the Hereafter. It had to be placed on that highway whose beginning is a pure and wholesome life which is conferred to those who have truly recognized Allāh *ta'ālā* and to the believers in this very world. The other and final beginning is that eternal life of Paradise which is promised to those who live a life of piety and righteousness.

The bounty and favour of commissioning Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*

¹ Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 122.

as a Prophet is mentioned by Allāh *ta'ālā* in the Qur'ān. There can be no better description and portrayal of the condition which prevailed at the time.

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَالِيَكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم
مِّنْهَا

Remember the bounty of Allāh upon you when you were enemies of one another, then He cast love in your hearts, so now you became brothers by His grace. You were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He rescued you from it.¹

We do not come across a more delicate and complex task and a heavier responsibility in the entire history of the human race than the one which was placed on the shoulders of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as a selected Prophet and Messenger of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Neither was there any orchard which proved to be so profitable and produced so many leaves and fruits as his, nor was there any endeavour and striving which proved to be as useful and life-giving as his striving among humanity at large. This is the greatest wonder in the history of wonders, and the supreme miracle of the world. Testimony in this regard is

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 103.

given by a famous French writer and poet, Lamartine, who presents an appreciation of the prophet-hood of Muḥammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. He writes:

Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman; to subvert superstitions which had been interposed between man and his Creator, to render God unto man and man unto God; to restore the rational and sacred idea of divinity amidst the chaos of the material and disfigured gods of idolatry, then existing. Never has a man undertaken a work so far beyond human power with so feeble means, for he had in the conception as well as in the execution of such a great design no other instrument than himself, and no other aid, except a handful of men living in a corner of the desert.¹

Lamartine writes further:

...And more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become Law. He created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race. He has left us

¹ Lamartine, *Histoire de la Turquie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1854, p. 276 (Quoted from *Islam in the World* by Dr. Zaki Ali, Lahore, 1947).

as the indelible characteristic of this Muslim nationality, the hatred of false gods and the passion for the One and Immaterial God. This avenging patriotism against the profanation of Heaven formed the virtue of the followers of Muhammad; the conquest of one-third of the earth to his dogma was his miracle; or rather it was not the miracle of a man but that of reason. The idea of the Unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of fabulous theologies, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient temples of idols and set on fire one-third of the world.¹

This all-embracing and universal revolution, and this grand task of resuscitating humanity or reconstructing it needed a new message which surpassed all messages and prophet-hoods. It demanded a Prophet who would raise the flag of guidance and the true religion in the entire world until eternity. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنْفَكِينَ حَتَّى
تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ. رَسُولٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُطَهَّرَةً. فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيَمَةٌ.

¹ Lamartine, *Histoire de la Turquie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1854, pp. 276-277 (Quoted from *Islam in the World* by Dr. Zaki Ali, Lahore, 1947).

The unbelievers: the people of the Book and the polytheists were not such as to desist till the clear evidence comes to them. A Messenger from Allāh, reciting to them purified pages. Wherein are written concrete books.

EXTRACTS FROM: TAZKIYAH WA IHSĀN

This book explains the importance of the Sufi path and its need in a most unique style. It presents its astounding effects and undertakes an unbiased appraisal of the fundamental part of man's moral and spiritual progresses. The book proves that this is a divinely-inspired system. This is most certainly a great achievement of Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Introduction

الحمد لله وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى، أما بعد!

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ
سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ
رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ.

[This wealth] is [also] for those who came after them [the Muhājirūn] and supplicate thus: "O our Sustainer! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any malice against the believers. O our Sustainer! You alone are kind, merciful.

In the above-quoted verse, the latter generations of Muslims are asked to have an approach of open-heartedness and acknowledgement of the past peoples.

The precedence and virtue which they enjoy in the fields of honesty and

sincerity, obedience to Allāh, fear and turning to Him, serving Islam, guarding and protecting the Islamic borders and forts has to be recognized and accepted with our hearts. The new generation must not harbour any malice and abhorrence towards them. They must not feel any hesitance and reluctance in acknowledging their services. Their tongues must sing their praises and pray for them. Their excuses and constraints must be accepted. And their shortcomings – from which no human is free – must be overlooked. This is because the one who makes *ijtihād* could be right or wrong. Only that person will fall who tries to walk and run. It is also a reality that apart from the teachings and guidelines of the Prophet *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, there is room for accepting and rejecting the rulings and teachings of all people.

This verse demands of us to be cautious when making any decision, expressing a view and applying a ruling to the pious predecessors, and to the imāms and leaders in the department of *īmān* and *iḥsān* [the Sufis]. We must not be hasty in this regard nor must we express any fanaticism. As long as we are not fully satisfied and convinced about an issue, we must abstain from issuing a definitive ruling. Allāh *ta‘ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا
بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ.

O believers! If there comes to you a sinner with any information, then verify it lest you harm some people out of ignorance, and later you become remorseful over what you have done.¹

The book before you is a collection of various articles (in Arabic and Urdu) which were written with a view to clarifying this subject. Although they were written on different occasion and times, the unity in the subject matter has stringed them together.

They contain any of the following themes:

A view was expounded in the light of knowledge and experience, and attention was drawn to a vacuum which existed in a certain department of life or in morals which needs to be filled.

It is in defence of a group which is on the true path, but has been continuously made a target of criticism and denigration. In most cases, people affiliated to this group have been callously criticized - in fact, condemned - without personal facts, practical experience, and without a deep study and investigation of their lives.

¹ Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49:: 6.

Based on several reasons, the author – while living in a purely academic and literary environment, and mixing with modern society – had more occasions than his contemporaries and peers to present himself in the service of these personalities and to derive benefit from them. The author observed them from very close quarters and was able to – by Allāh’s inspiration – present his impressions and observations in many of his Arabic and Urdu writings.

These articles make up the core of his lengthy experiences and deep study. Today this collection is being published under the title *Tazkiyah Wa Ih̄sān Yā Taṣawwuf Wa Sulūk* for the seekers of the truth. The author perceives this as an obligation on him and payment of a debt. Several articles will make mention of those personalities whose favours entire countries and nations cannot pay back. And through whose sincere and untiring efforts, concerns and blessings millions of people were first blessed with the wealth of Islam, the bounty of īmān and the rank of ih̄sān. Even if a person had to give his soul – in fact, the treasures of both the worlds – for this, it will be worth it.

This collection is firstly compiled with the intention of reward, and out of a desire and quest for Allāh’s pleasure. Thereafter, it is published in the hope of creating waves in the ocean of a person’s heart and reawakening his passion for īmān;

and for the intelligent, unbiased and truth-seeking members of the Islamic ummat to rethink and re-ponder this issue, and be ready to give it as much progress as possible.

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī
Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, Rāi Bareilly
5/5/1399 A.H.
3/4/1979¹

Tazkiyah and Ihsān – the Sole Treatment for all Evils

Cast a glance at those countries where the work of inviting to Allāh *ta'ālā*, spirituality, true Allāh-worship and purification of the self has stopped for some time. And at the number of 'ulamā' (who pave the way for a connection between humans and Allāh *ta'ālā*, and who direct them towards their internal rectification) which has dropped so much either because of the influence of Western civilization, being in close proximity to the West or for other reasons. In those countries you will find a vacuum – a terrifying and lengthy vacuum – which can neither be filled by extensive and in-depth knowledge, intelligence and sharpness of mind, literary skills, a deep bond with Arabic language and literature, genealogical relations, nor freedom and autonomy. This is a spiritual and moral dilemma for which there is no solution.

¹ *Tazkiyah Wa Ihsān*, p. 12.

The upper classes and the masses have succumbed to a universal materialism, blind love for wealth, and other social and moral illnesses. The educated people and intellectuals (whether religious education and culture or materialist) are all trapped in spiritual ailments such as the love for position and authority, jealousy and miserliness, pride and egotism, the desire for popularity, hypocrisy and flattery, and an awe for matter and power.

As for social and political movements – they have been ruined by selfishness, an absence of training and weakness of their leaders.

As for institutes and organizations, mutual differences, a lack of perceiving their responsibilities, desire for the world, and a love for increase in salaries have rendered them useless. They have confined themselves to doing these things only.

As for the ‘ulamā’, externalism, superficiality, paying lip-service, unnecessary and pointless fear for poverty, desire for comforts and enjoyment have ruined their respect and dignity.

The treatment for all this can be found in nothing but that prophetic purification which is mentioned in the Qur’ān, which is the objective of commissioning Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam,

and in that *rabbānīyyat* which is required of the ‘ulamā’.

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّيْنَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

Become the men of Allāh as you used to teach the Book and just as you yourself used to study it.¹

I am not stressing any particular form of tazkiyah as is common nowadays, and which in the latter days is referred to as taṣawwuf. I do not consider all the flag bearers of taṣawwuf to be completely free from every erroneous way and misunderstanding, nor do I consider them to be sinless. However, what I can say is that it most essential for the vacuum which has crept into our lives and our society be filled as quickly as possible. For this, it is necessary for tazkiyah, iḥsān and spiritual jurisprudence to be revived just as our predecessors had revived it in their respective times. All this has to be on the system of prophet-hood, in the light of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. This work is vital in every era and every place where Muslims are living. It is most crucial because this vacuum is a major serious vacuum, and it has far-reaching consequences on our individual and collective lives.

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 79.

I would like to quote an Arab poet who speaks about those who criticize those who fulfilled this responsibility in their respective eras and rendered this service.

أَقْلُوا عَلَيْهِم لَا أَبَا لِأَيِّكُمْ – مِنَ اللُّومِ أَوْ سَدُّوا الْمَكَانَ الَّذِي سَدُّوا

May you be bereft of a father! Either stop denigrating them or fill the vacuum which they filled.

Too many criticisms have been levelled against these servants of Allāh. The question is if there is anyone to take their place who would treat the pain?

Taṣawwuf and Sulūk – A Divinely-Inspired System

Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed this ummat with the wealth of collective inspiration which is protected against every type of danger, harm, individual weakness and misunderstanding.

An elucidation of the above statement is that when Islam and Muslims are faced with a delicate and important issue, and it becomes difficult to make a decision about it and reach a result; or the changing times and demands of conditions present a new need, then Allāh *ta'ālā* creates an urgency in the hearts of a considerable number of 'ulamā' and devoted people who possess pure selves and strong willpower to fulfil this new need. Allāh *ta'ālā* directs them towards this totally to the extent that they believe that they have been ordered to carry out

this task and that they are accountable to Allāh *ta'ālā* for it. We then clearly see divine help and assistance coming to them from the unseen for the completion of this task. They perceive from the depths of their hearts that they are being drawn towards it. This is that reality which we expressed as “collective inspiration” or a collective guidance. Islamic history is filled with examples of this nature.

This inspiration is sometimes experienced by a few companions, as was the case with the incident related to the commencement of adhān. Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Zayd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and Hadrat ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* saw a similar dream and both were taught the words of the adhān in their dreams. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* affirmed both of them and adhān was given a status in the Sharī‘ah which prevails throughout the Islamic world today. Or as it happened with regard to Laylatul Qadr (the night of power) regarding which Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* and Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* relate on the authority of Hadrat ‘Abullāh ibn ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*: A few Companions came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and related to him that they saw a dream in which Laylatul Qadr was shown to them in the last seven nights of Ramadān. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi*

wa sallam said to them: “I see that you all saw the same dream which makes reference to the last seven nights. Thus, whoever wants to search for it [Laylatul Qadr] should search for it in these seven nights.”

Very similar to this is the issue of the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh whose origin is established from Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. After performing it for three nights, he stopped out of concern that it will become compulsory on the ummat and could be a cause of hardship for them. The Muslims began performing it individually. Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu then promulgated it in congregation. This action of Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu was a result of divine inspiration and heavenly guidance. Immense good was hidden in it. Allāh ta‘ālā created in the hearts of the Muslims a concern to perform this ṣalāh with congregation and an enthusiasm to read the Qur’ān in it. This proved to be the foremost means for the memorization and preservation of the Qur’ān. Subsequently, it created a spirit of competition and a desire to remain awake in the nights of Ramaḍān. In this regard, we see a glaring difference between the Ahl as-Sunnah who adopted the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh and other groups who reject it – where there is an abundance of Qur’ān memorization among the Ahl as-Sunnah, and due importance to its study.

This inspiration is sometimes experienced by a large group of Muslims. Their unanimity on a certain issue or focusing on a specific need can neither be said to be coincidental nor the result of a conspiracy. This effort of theirs in this regard brings immense benefit to Islam and the Muslims, fills a certain vacuum in their lives, comes as a barrier to a terrifying tribulation, seals off a fissure, or realizes a major objective of Islam.

Examples of a blessed collective inspiration (which was experienced by countless erudite ‘ulamā’ and devoted practical personalities) include: compilation of the Qur’ān during the era of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*, the collection and compilation of Ahādīth in the first two eras of Islam and in the succeeding centuries, the extraction of rulings by the Mujtahidīn, the examination of juridical rulings, the science of grammar and recitation, the principles of jurisprudence and the Qur’ān, and preservation of its language, the codification of all beneficial sciences, the construction of madāris, the printing and publishing of books and so on. These are excellent examples of this collective inspiration through which the most important needs of Islam and Muslims were fulfilled, and future dangers were sealed off.

Another example of this collective inspiration is the task of refuting and

disproving deviated sects, atheists and agnostics, philosophies which proclaim idleness, and destruction-seeking movements. Muslims possessing extraordinary and phenomenal knowledge and intelligence, mental acumen and strong īmān came onto this field and completely exposed these movements and philosophies, and saved the Muslims from their evil influences.

All these achievements are manifestations of divine inspiration with which a large group of Muslims was honoured in every stage of Islamic history in centres of knowledge and culture. This in itself is a proof of Allāh's favour on this ummat and the high rank it holds in His sight. This uninterrupted inspiration and continuous divine help is a glaring proof of the seal of prophet-hood, and the termination of revelation after Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. We do not find such a clear and unending parallel in the previous nations. Bearing in mind that the system of prophet-hood was still continuing, they did not even need it.

The broad and well-established system of purification of the self and culturing of character which in the later centuries took on the form of an independent science, identifying the plots of the self and Shayṭān, treating carnal and moral ailments, explaining and systemizing the means of acquiring a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* and spiritual affiliation whose

origins was already found in the traditional and Shar'ī words of “tazkiyah wa ihsān” and later came to be known as “taṣawwuf” or Sufism is another glittering example of collective inspiration. The masters in this field gradually conveyed it to the level of ijtihād and classified it as a major service to religion and a jihād of the time through which Allāh *ta'ālā* revived the dead orchards of the hearts and cured those who were patients of the soul. Through these devoted Allāh-conscious 'ulamā' and disciples who were trained by them, Islam spread to distant lands and vast countries (like India, the eastern Indian islands and the African continent). Millions of people were guided and such men and women were born through their training who – in their respective times – blew the spirit of imān, conviction and good deeds in Muslim society; and they played key and leading roles on the fields of jihād on countless occasions. None can deny the usefulness of this group and its services except the one who has no knowledge of Islamic history or whose eyes are covered with a band of prejudice and bigotry.

While defining a mutawātir Hadīth and providing a proof for its absolute authenticity, the scholars of Hadīth principles state: “Such a large number of people in every era must have reported it that a sound mind and human practices refuse to accept that such a large number

of people could have related it incorrectly, concurred on fabricating it, or that it was the result of a conspiracy.”

Even through a cursory glance at history this point becomes clear that from the second century to the present age, a large number of Allāh’s devoted servants in every era and every country – uninterruptedly and without exception – adopted this way and invited others to it. They benefited from it and conveyed its benefit to others as well. They remained occupied and engrossed in its propagation throughout their lives, and they were fully convinced of and satisfied by its correctness and effectiveness. These men were the core elements of their respective societies – not only as regards their righteousness, sincerity, selflessness, purity of their selves and internal piety – but also in their knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, ardent love for the Sunnah, and dislike and abhorrence for innovations. They surpassed their contemporaries in these qualities. It is possible for one or two, or five or ten to err in judgement or succumb to a conspiracy. This is not far-fetched. However, for millions of personalities who are seen at the forefront of the ummat even in their knowledge and practical application, to remain in error for century after century, to insist on that system, to call towards it, and to remain firm and steadfast on it with resoluteness is most

certainly illogical, irrational and abnormal. Furthermore, millions of people finding guidance through these pure souls, and reaching the peaks of spiritual excellences is a continuous piece of information which is impossible to reject. It is rationally and traditionally impossible that despite differences in times and climes, this massive group of truthful and devoted personalities to be caught up in a continuous and unending error and misjudgement. And for Allāh *ta'ālā* – who is all-merciful, all-wise and the absolute guide – and who made the following promise to not expose this misunderstanding of theirs and to not steer them correctly! Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths. Surely Allāh is with the righteous.

Remove these genuine and devoted servants from Islamic history – each one of whom was the best flower of his time, a lighthouse, and a source of honour and pride for the human race – and see what remains without them! If we cannot have confidence and faith in them, which other group can there be which is worthy of our confidence and a source of pride for us!?¹

¹ *Tazkiyah Wa Ih̥sān*, p. 31.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What enlightening and impressive themes and facts which ought to be studied carefully and pondered over. We are in severe need of moulding ourselves in that mould so that this chain of Hadrat Maulānā's taṣawwuf and sulūk not only continues but progresses. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib (a khalifah of Hadrat Maulānā) is continuing this chain of taṣawwuf and seekers are turning to him. It is a source of much joy to us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* increase his efforts and benefits. Āmīn.

EXTRACTS FROM: PĀJĀ SURĀGH ZINDAGĪ

Pājā Surāgh Zindagī of Mufakkir Islam Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* is an excellent book in which he discusses the rank and status of students who are studying the prophetic sciences, the expectations which the community has of them, and their responsibilities in the present era. Some of its important and valuable themes are quoted here. Allāh willing, they will be most useful and enlightening for not only students but for the honourable ‘ulamā’ as well. (compiler)

Responsibilities of Madrasah Students and Graduates

Dear friends! As a student of a madrasah, your work is the most delicate and the greatest. I do not know of any group in the world whose work is so delicate, extensive and important. Ponder over these words once again. Your one extremity is connected to the prophet-hood of Muḥammad Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and the other with life. This is the reason for the delicateness of your work and proof of your greatness. While a bond and connection with the prophet-hood of Muḥammad sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam is a great fortune and accolade, it is also a very heavy responsibility. You have with you the greatest treasure and most valuable capital of truths and beliefs. Certain responsibilities are placed on you by

virtue of your connection with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. You have to possess unshakeable conviction and firmly embedded īmān. You ought to have the courage that even if you were to receive the entire world, there is no question of your even thinking about giving up a single point from this religion. Your hearts have to be filled with the passion to defend and help it. Your hearts must be overflowing with pride and gratitude for this irreplaceable treasure. You have to possess unshakeable conviction in its genuineness, rationality, eternity, applicability in every era, loftiness, superiority and spotlessness. You must be fully convinced that everything which is opposed to it is jāhiliyyah (ignorance) and the legacy of jāhiliyyah. While you say:

سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا

We hear and we obey.

...when you hear Allāh's orders and Islamic teachings, you must be able to address the flag-bearers of the jāhiliyyah system and say to them:

كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى
تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدُّهُ

We reject you. Enmity and hatred has come to the open between us and you to last until you believe in Allāh alone.¹

You must have conviction that the salvation of this world lies solely in the light of Islamic guidance and the way shown by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. You have to have the firm belief that in this flood, the prophet-hood and leadership of Muḥammad Rasūlullāh is the only ship which can rescue you. You must believe unflinchingly that the prerequisite for victory of individuals and nations lies solely in following Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. This is a glaring fact:

“Honour in both worlds lies solely in following Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Anyone who is not the dust of his threshold (does not emulate him), then may dust be on his head (may he be humiliated and disgraced).”

You accept the teachings of Rasūlullāh’s prophet-hood to be the quintessence of knowledge and the epitome of facts and realities. As for all the opposing isms, philosophies, rationalizations and traditions of the world – you are not prepared to accord them any status beyond fairytales and fabrications. You are fully conversant with the reality of

¹ Sūrah al-Mumtaḥinah, 60: 4.

tauḥīd and insist on it. As for polytheism and the paganism of the world – no matter how fancy and academic terminologies and philosophical language they are expressed in, you look at them with scorn and derision. And you are not prepared to accord them a status more than:

زُخْرِفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا

...embellished words by way of delusion.¹

You are intensely desirous of following the Sunnah and have full conviction in:

خَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The best way is the way of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam.

You are fully convinced and satisfied that innovations are harmful and unacceptable.

In short, you believe in the comprehensiveness of the prophet-hood of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam in your creed, mind, thoughts, heart, inclinations and academically; and you are a practical exposition of it.

The Distinctiveness of Students and Graduates

Dear friends! Your distinction over other Muslims is that a general belief in these

¹ Sūrah al-An‘ām, 6: 112.

realities is enough for others, while you have to possess total mental satisfaction. A mere verbal proclamation will not suffice for you; you will have to call and invite towards it. If the conviction of others is confined to themselves, yours has to extend to others, and must be able to fill the conviction of thousands of people. This is not possible as long as your intoxication, inebriation and delirium have not reached their peak and the following reality is not found in you:

يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ إِلَى الْكُفْرِ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقَذَّفَ فِي النَّارِ

He detests returning to unbelief just as he detests being cast into the fire.

And on the surface knowledge of the teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam may be sufficient for others, while it is essential for you to be firmly embedded in the sciences of prophethood, to have ardent love for them, to have reached a level of self-obliteration in them, and to insist and persist in them. Without this, one cannot even imagine himself doing the work of propagation. In fact, in this era of various forms of propagation and movements, it is difficult to preserve one's own peculiarities and capital wealth.

Note: This article most certainly deserves the attention of students. They must study it carefully and accept Hadrat Maulānā's advice. (compiler)

Spiritual Conditions

It is worth remembering that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam left behind a vast and huge treasure of sciences and injunctions. After all:

فإن الأنبياء لم يورثوا دينارا ولا درهما، ولكن ورثوا هذا العلم

The Prophets did not inherit gold and silver coins, they inherited knowledge.

This treasure is preserved in the form of the Qur’ān, Hadīth, jurisprudence and rules and regulations. By the grace of Allāh *ta’ālā* your madrasah is a major centre which is rendering services in this regard.

In the same way, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam left behind certain qualities, peculiar traits and conditions. Just as the first treasure has been transferred from generation to generation, and Allāh *ta’ālā* made arrangements for its preservation and proliferation, the second treasure has also been conveyed from generation to generation. Allāh *ta’ālā* made arrangements for its preservation as well. What are these qualities and peculiar traits? They are conviction, devotion, faith and reckoning, a deep bond with Allāh *ta’ālā*, turning to Him, submitting before Him, and self-obliteration and self-respect. Prophetic sciences combine injunctions, qualities and conditions.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom.¹

If only the sciences and injunctions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* are taken while spiritual conditions and qualities are left aside, it will be a defective inheritance and an incomplete deputyship. Those who were the deputies of prophet-hood and conveyed the legacy of Islam to us were not trustees of just one part. They were embellished with both treasures. Even now, the call to Islam and an Islamic revolution cannot be realized by the first part alone. The pious predecessors with whom you have the honour of being affiliated also combined both treasures. If you really want to climb the lofty position of true deputyship, you will have to strive to acquire this comprehensiveness. Without it, proficiency in knowledge is like an imitation flower which has neither any fragrance nor freshness. Today there is no shortage of imitation flowers in this market of the world. You and I cannot

¹ Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 2.

make any meaningful contribution in it. What it really needs is fresh flowers from the garden of prophet-hood; flowers which perfume the senses and before which the flowers of this world feel ashamed.

فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Thus the truth prevailed and whatever they had done went in vain.¹

Spiritual Decline of the Madāris

Do not be offended by what I have to say. Since quite some time now our madāris are becoming devoid of those lush and fresh flowers. There is a continuous decline in those qualities and attributes [referred to previously]. We will have to do some introspection and see to what extent the one who made the following statement is correct:

I got up moist [green] from the madrasah and khānqāh – having no life, no love, no recognition and no vision.

Consequently, the number of graduating students from our madāris far surpasses the number which used to graduate in the past. Despite this, they are having no impact on life

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say this repeatedly. If only our students focussed their

¹ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 118.

attention on this aspect, Muslims of today would not be experiencing this pitiable condition. (compiler)

Revolutionary Personalities

In the beginning, an indigent fakir by the name of Khwājah Muʿīn ad-Dīn Ajmerī *rahimahullāh* or Sayyid ʿAlī Hamdānī Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* arrived and filled the entire country with the heat of his heart and the light of his imān. Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* caused a revolution in the Mogul Empire. It was through his silent efforts that a jurist and Sharīʿah-abiding king like Aurangzeb took over the throne from Akbar. Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* changed the direction of this vast and immense country, and made a deep impact on the entire system of thinking and system of education. Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Sāhib [Nānautwī] *rahimahullāh* established such an enormous Islamic fort [Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband] at a time when despair and despondency had pervaded the country. He then blew a new life into the sciences of the Sharīʿah. Then in the recent past, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* blew a new spirit into the task of striving for the sake of imān and Dīn...

A single vigilant man changed the colour of the world.

QUOTATIONS FROM: THE 15TH CENTURY OF THE HIJRAH

Foreword

Celebrations in connection with the advent of the 15th century of the Hijrah started well in advance – before the 1st of Muharram 1401 A.H. (10 November 1980). Voices were heard in the Islamic world and beyond well in advance, and preparations had commenced to welcome it. There were several political reasons, events and incidents, including the impact of various Islamic movements which lent importance to this change-over (which occurs after the turn of every century) as had never been accorded before to the beginning of a new century. In the Arab and non-Arab countries a series of conferences, meetings and seminars were planned under various names and themes. Even a secular country like India decided to celebrate the occasion and to issue a commemorative postal stamp to mark the occasion. Islamic newspapers and periodicals began making preparations to issue special editions. I was asked by several centres, organizations and Islamic publishing houses to write articles, and invitations were extended to me to attend the meetings and conferences which were organized for this occasion.

Despite this world-wide rejoicing, I could not bring myself to write anything on this subject or to address any conference or meeting. The present state of affairs in the Islamic world and recent events had left me so dispirited that I found no urge and enthusiasm to welcome the new century. This is why I excused myself from most of the requests and invitations which I received.

However, Allāh *ta'ālā* had willed otherwise. The Students Islamic Movement decided to organize a week-long celebration in honour of the 15th century. It was to begin on the 1st of November 1980 (22 Dhū al-Hijjah 1400 A.H.) in the Ganga Prasad Memorial Hall in Lucknow. They insisted that I inaugurate the meeting. I agreed because of their persistence and also out of consideration to the enthusiasm of these young men.

In my mind I had decided that I will speak for a few minutes and draw attention to certain important aspects. On the same day I had to attend a Religious Education Conference in Etah district. Time permitted me to address the meeting and then proceed directly to the railway station. However, the impact of the atmosphere, the enthusiasm of the audience and – most of all, divine will – made me to completely forget that I had a journey to undertake and a train to catch. Had I picked up a pen and tried to write

on this subject, I would probably not have been able to write so much on the subject.

My speech was tape-recorded and a transcript of it was prepared and presented to me. Bearing in mind that the spoken word differs from the written one and that there was a difference in the atmosphere now, I felt the need to make several changes and alterations. Many things were said from memory some of which were quotations from books, but were related from memory. Dates and sources were needed, and some references were made, but had to be explained. I focused on all these angles. Those who require additional details could refer to the books and sources which I made reference to. I did this so that this short and concise subject could serve as an impetus for additional and deeper study. In this way, a speech which was delivered without prior preparation has been moulded into a historical subject.

Incidentally, the Lucknow station of All India Radio requested me to say a few words on this subject. A portion of this subject has been included here.

After going through the subject a second time and making the necessary changes and alterations, I felt that it was now ready for publication. It has taken the shape of a short appraisal, evaluation and

message. The essence of the history of several centuries has been presented. The author also has a personal reason in preparing this work, viz. I will be saved from the many requests which I receive to express my views on this subject in the form of speeches and articles. Whatever needs to be said has more or less been said here.

If any person comes across any defect in this article (which was originally a speech), or does not find any mention of an important personality or institute, he must understand that this is not a directory of the revivalist and reformational efforts of the last 15 centuries, or of personalities and movements of this period. It is merely a concise mention and appraisal of the reformational efforts of the last 15 centuries.

This booklet is presented as a gift and a message from the author and the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications not just for the new year, but for the new century. I hope that omissions and defects which are normally found in a speech will be overlooked, and this sincere gift will be accepted.

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī
Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow
1 Muḥarram al-Harām 1401 A.H.
10 November 1980

The Fifteenth Century

All praise is due to Allāh. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Presently, the entire world is talking about the advent of the 15th century of the Hijrah. The beginning of which commences with the emigration of Muḥammad Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Generally, the beginning of a century is marked by the birth or death of a great personality, the establishment of a sultanate or great victories. A new calendar then comes into existence. Nonetheless, the peculiarity and special feature of Islam is that it did not even name itself in the name of its Messenger but in his message. Islam is not the name of a certain personality, rather it is the name of a decision and a course of action. In other words, it entails submitting one's self to the injunctions of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is the peculiar feature of this century. It too does not commence with a great personality – not even with the beloved and sanctified personality of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam who, the Muslims firmly believe to be the most beloved and sanctified after Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Despite this, this century is neither linked to his birth nor his demise although both are most important events in the world. Instead, it is linked to his emigration.

What this means is that when a new Islamic century commences, it will bring with it a message. It does not only revive the memory of a personality or group. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* bid farewell to his beloved homeland for a grand objective, and decided to settle down in a new city. This point reminds us of a message and a major step. He did not take this step just to save his life or the lives of a few of his friends and companions. Rather, he did it to preserve Allāh's message and to create an opportunity to convey it to the entire world. This century thus reminds us that the most beloved of things can be given up for the sake of a greater objective. It is indeed an encouraging and heartening message in the history of the world. It prompts us that no matter how unique a thing may be, no matter how many obstacles and difficulties are placed in its path, no matter how upsetting the conditions may be, no matter how intense resistance and how many court cases it has to face – if its objective is success for humanity, if there is sincerity of intention and resoluteness of will – then notwithstanding all the resistance and opposition, that message will survive and success and victory are destined for it.

This 15th century does not give the message of courage to Muslims alone but to the entire human race and to all those who have some sort of correct objective,

are flag-bearers of a useful message, who wish to strive for something good, and who have stood up for a grand objective. It is a message of a new life for all of them.

Whether this 15th century will prove to be blessed for Muslims and humanity or – Allāh forbid – unblessed, that we cannot say at present. From among Allāh's absolute decisions and eternal Qur'ānic facts and realities is the following:

وَأَنَّ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى

*Man only receives what he earned.*¹

In his life of this world and in the life after death, man only receives that amount for which he strove. His share will be what he worked for, and its results will come to him.

Allāh *ta'ālā* then says:

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى

*His earning will certainly be shown [to him].*²

It is a most reassuring message for all human generations and all eras of history – that the result of man's efforts will

¹ Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 39.

² Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 40.

certainly be seen, its fruits will certainly be observed.

ثُمَّ يَجْزِيهِ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوْفَى

He will then be recompensed for it with the fullest recompense.¹

The profitability and fruitfulness of human endeavour as expressed in this verse is a most encouraging and resuscitating message.

Iqbāl [the poet] had said with reference to man:

Life is fashioned by actions; so is Paradise and Hell. Man – by nature – is neither an angel nor a devil.

I will substitute the word “century” for man in this couplet. The reality of this 15th century and all the centuries which passed is that they are neither blessed nor cursed in themselves. Their blessedness or absence of it is dependent on man’s efforts in the correct direction and realizing his goals in the correct manner. We cannot say with regard to a century – in fact, even with regard to a year, month, day or hour – whether it will be blessed or not. In Islam there is no room for the unfounded theory of blessedness or unblessed-ness of time which is still found in some nations which

¹ Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 41.

have remained deprived of the teachings of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. It is totally against the Islamic way of thinking for us to say that this century is very blessed and that it will be an era for the progress of the Muslim nation; or that this century will prove to be cursed for a certain nation or for humanity. There is no support whatsoever for such a theory in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Thus, to think that a certain time is eternally blessed or cursed results in severe damage to man's power for action. If a person thinks before hand that a certain hour is going to bring bad luck, his abilities will dissolve, and not only his power to act, even his ability to make a decision will cease.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* completely uprooted superstition, naivety and personality worship from their roots. There was a solar eclipse on one occasion. Allāh *ta'ālā* willed to educate and train the Muslims. Rasūlullāh's son, Ibrāhīm, had passed away a short while before. The Arabs were still attached to their ignorant ways, and the effects of ignorance had pervaded the entire world. The incident too was so extraordinary and emotional that some Muslims unwittingly commented: "The sun has also been affected by the death of Rasūlullāh's son."

If it was any other worldly leader, senior of a certain movement, commander of a group; then if he did not refute this, he would at least remain silent because it

would work to the advantage of his movement. He would say: I did not prompt anyone to make such a statement. It came automatically in the hearts of people to think that this solar eclipse occurred because of the death of Rasūlullāh's son. There is no need to refute this!

This is the difference between a Messenger and a non-messenger. Politically minded people try to score points from events (even if they were not within their control), while Prophets deem them injurious to religion, and consider taking advantage of them to be unlawful and synonymous to unbelief. I do not think anyone apart from Muḥammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam passed such a test with such flying colours. We can certainly find similar examples from the Prophets, but we will not find them among founders of movements and political leaders.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam devoted a sermon to this incident and said:

إن الشمس والقمر ايتان من آيات الله، لا يخسفان لموت أحد ولا لحياته (صحيح مسلم).

The sun and moon are two signs from among the many signs of Allāh. They do not eclipse because of the death or life of anyone.

It is as though Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* asked: “What did you say? The sun and moon do not undergo any change by the birth or death of any person. They are really two signs from the many signs of Allāh *ta’ālā*. A completely different law applies to them. They are not affected by the departure of a great personality of this world or by any event which is associated to him.”

Had Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* remained silent on this occasion, it would not have resulted in any serious evil. It was merely an incorrect thought which was born out of noble thoughts, love and respect; and out of anxiety. Yet, the Messenger of Allāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* could not tolerate even this much and said: No! This incident has nothing to do with my family or children. The universe is much more vast and Allāh’s Being is not in need of it. Allāh’s law supersedes all these things.

This was Rasūlullāh’s manner of steering his followers to a certain principle which was given to the entire human race. The human mind is more valuable and more worthy of consideration than the human race because it rules the entire human race. The human race does not rule over the human mind. Here it was a matter of deviation by the human mind. It was most dangerous, and treating and putting an end to it was essential.

I was explaining to you that no century can in itself be referred to as blessed or cursed. Let me give you the example of a tumbler. If a tumbler is empty, can you say that it is good or bad? Rather, it is dependent on what the tumbler holds. Here we have a tumbler of water before us. If – Allāh forbid – it contained wine, it would have been a wine goblet. If it was filled with poison, it would have been a tumbler of poison. The tumbler in itself is innocent and a totally impartial object. It is dependent on what you fill it with. If you fill it with zam zam, it will be a tumbler of zam zam. If – Allāh forbid – you fill it with wine, it will be a wine glass.

Thus, what this century will hold for the human race – whether it will be blessed or cursed – depends entirely on my efforts, your efforts and the efforts of the Muslim community at large which Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed to bear His final message.

Hadrat Maulānā then related the attacks of the Tartars in 616 A.H. against 'Alā' ad-Dīn Khwārizm Shāh, the king of the largest kingdom of the time.

It was the beginning of the seventh century of the Hijrah and the 13th century of the Christian calendar. The Tartars got up like ants and locusts, and pounced on the Muslim world. They flattened Turkistan and Iran, and reduced entire cities to rubble. Minarets were made of

human skulls and corpses, which they climbed and made their announcements. Entire cities were turned into graveyards.

What was the Muslims' attitude to this event? It can be gauged from the famous statement and saying which prevailed among the Muslims of that time:

إذا قيل لك أن التتر انهزموا فلا تصدق

You can believe everything, but if you are informed that the Tartars were defeated in any battle, do not believe it.

A single wrong committed by 'Alā' ad-Dīn Khwārizm Shāh causes the Tartars to come out of their centuries'-long incarceration (details of which you can read in the pages of history) and the Muslims are made their target. They unleashed their fury on Turkistan, Iran and Iraq; and completely decimated the governments, culture and civilization of those countries. This was the time when caravans of intelligent people left hastily from these areas, and came to India where they found refuge. This was in the 13th century of the Christian calendar.

Every discerning person to whom Allāh *ta'ālā* gave eyes and the ability to draw conclusions from causes and effects could have predicted that Islam has had its day, and that the advancing star of Muslims is to set forever. The Muslims suffered deep-seated losses from this tumultuous world event because they were the main targets.

This is why the field of work was most constricted for them and they had the least hopes.

In his book, *Preaching of Islam*, Arnold tries to paint a picture of the Muslims' despair and hopelessness. He writes:

This was a task for the missionary energies of Islam that was rendered more difficult from the fact that there were two powerful competitors in the field. The spectacle of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam emulously striving to win the allegiance of the fierce conquerors that had set their feet on the necks of adherents of these great missionary religions, is one that is without parallel in the history of the world...¹

For Islam to enter into competition with such powerful rivals as Buddhism and Christianity were at the outset of the period of the Mongol rule, must have appeared a well nigh hopeless undertaking.²

All signs indicated that Christianity would succeed. Firstly because it was not the main opposition in this battle. The second reason was that the sons of Genghis Khan had Christian wives and the Christian clergy were to be found in the

¹ Arnold, *Preaching of Islam*, p. 219.

² Ibid. p. 225

Mongol courts. Thus, if it was the question of embracing a religion, it could have been said with certainty that they would embrace nothing but Christianity. But do you know what happened? Arnold was forced to write:

But Islam was to rise again from the ashes of the former grandeur and through its preachers won over these savage conquerors to the acceptance of the faith.¹

He writes further:

In spite of all difficulties, however, the Mongols and the savage tribes that followed in their wake were at length brought to submit to the faith of the Muslim peoples whom they had crushed beneath their feet.²

Thus, that century which had commenced with a universal darkness and worldwide despondency became a clear victory for Islam, and the world was left amazed. In fact, it was left stupefied over the fact that the Tartars whose swords were just now dripping with Muslim blood had now entered the fold of Islam.

¹ Ibid. p.259.

² Ibid. p. 227.

Do you know who conquered the Tartars and who made them to utter the creed of Islam?

It was the people of the heart who came forward in this hour of crisis and all-pervading gloom. They were men who possessed inner spiritual strength. Within half a century they turned the Mongols into Muslims.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* relates in detail how King Tughluq Taymūr and dignitaries of his government embraced Islam. He then writes:

This was the achievement of Muslim intellectuals, sincere ‘ulamā’, lecturers, preachers and – most of all – men of the heart and spiritual masters. There cannot be two opinions about this fact. The entire history bears testimony to the fact that these spiritual masters worked from within, and that the Tartars are in their books of deeds. When these millions of people (who had an impact on history) will wake up on the day of Resurrection, they will be listed in their accounts. Speaking about these spiritual masters prompts me to quote the following couplet of Akbar Allāhābādī Marhūm:

The best people are those who are today beneath the soil (in their graves). Unfortunately, people are hurling abuses at them and complaining about them.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* then describes the deviation and rebellion

against Islam in the 10th century (i.e. during the rule of King Akbar). He writes:

A similar incident took place right here in India. A resolute, intelligent and young sultan who had several victories under his belt happened to have a few talented and intelligent ‘ulamā’ (with Abū al-Faḍl and Fayḍī being at the forefront). They joined a movement whose objective was to change the course of Islam and turn it towards the Dīn-e-Ilāhī of Akbar and that “universality of religions”.

This was a dangerous confluence of material power and academic acumen, or a conspiracy laid by an autocratic power and an unbridled and free mindset rarely to be found in history. It was openly announced that the 10th century of Islam is about to come to an end, the 11th century is to start, and 1 000 years [ten centuries] is more than enough for any religion.

The end of the 10th century came with this information that the feet of Islam are slipping in this country. In addition to political power, religious and spiritual leadership is to be handed over to other powers. This revolution was really cancelling the efforts of those conquerors who, many centuries ago, offered their lives and conquered this land.

On the other hand, it was pouring water over the efforts of Hadrat Khwājah Mu‘īn ad-Dīn Chishtī *rahimahullāh* and his pure

and proficient deputies who sat in their respective corners and taught the lessons of humanity, love, human equality and social justice. They remained distant from the government, yet they undertook its religious and moral supervision. They provided to the government and society at large individuals who were righteous, strong-willed, trustworthy, Allāh-fearing and concerned for the welfare of their fellow humans. They also blew a new spirit in the academic and educational movement of the country.

What happened thereafter?

I have to say this: A star rose not from the political or material horizon, but purely from that spiritual corner, from that corner of sincerity and devotion, from that corner of knowledge and wisdom which has been always carrying out its task and taking care of the fallen ones. The name of this star is Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī (971-1034 A.H.) regarding whom Iqbāl said:

He was the custodian of the Muslim nations' wealth in India, whom Allāh had awakened at the exact time. He whose neck refused to bend before Jahāngīr, from whose heated self, free people obtained heat.

An unknown fakir sitting in one corner of Sirhind resolves to combat this conspiracy against Islam which had been hatched by the most intelligent minds of

the country. He asked: Why are Muslims being deprived of living in this country with honour and dignity, and why are they not allowed the right to uphold their religious symbols? Why are restrictions being placed on them alone?

What was the result of this?

The world saw a complete change at the beginning of the 11th century. The future of Islam was completely secured in this country for the next two to three centuries. That servant of Allāh *ta'ālā* [Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī] sat down in Sirhind and exposed the academic fallacies which were presented against the need and continuity of the prophet-hood of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and the status and eternity of the Sharī'ah and Sunnah; and restored confidence in them.

What was his strategy in putting an end to the danger which was increasing with immense speed? It was not one of clamour and making an uproar. It did not entail mustering a force against Akbar. His study of history and Qur'ānic insight taught him that if he were to come out as an open enemy, he will be wiped out and he will have no time to accomplish anything. [His study and insight] taught him to turn in prayer to Allāh *ta'ālā*, to gather sincere and worthy individuals around him, and to put them through a complete course of training. They must be

able to pass through oceans of wealth and power without getting themselves moist in the least. They must not even raise their eyes towards authority and power. They had to work on the hearts of the Muslims who were holding senior posts and responsibilities in the court of Jahāngīr. They were to write to them saying: “We can see that Islam is presently in the throes of death. You have to do something – not in an injurious manner – but in a totally constructive and academic manner. And with faith and conviction in your hearts.”

Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* began writing letters. The list of names with whom he corresponded is long. ‘Abd ar-Rahīm Khān Khānān and Nawāb Murtaḍā Khān (Sayyid Farīd) are noteworthy.

What was the outcome of this?

The scene changed within 15-20 years. Indian Muslims became central figures and authorities not only for India but for the entire Islamic world. They became leaders in the fields of spirituality, science of Hadīth and the Arabic language (which was the reserve of Arabic speaking countries). All this was through the efforts of this devoted man of Allāh *ta’ālā* on account of whom India enjoyed that central position and through whom experts in the Islamic sciences were born. One lamp ignited the next and after some time, Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib

rahimahullāh (1114-1176 A.H.) was born. He gave birth to a new form of scholastic theology. He explained and expounded on the system of *khilāfat*, and presented such a correct structure of an Islamic government which was probably unprecedented in academic circles. Together with this, he made efforts to give life and blow a new spirit into India's falling Muslim rule because its defeat and fall would result in severe political and moral mayhem in India.

His proficient and inspired sons (with Hadrat Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz at the forefront) proliferated the sciences of the Qur'ān and Sunnah in this country. They developed a thirst for studying and understanding the Qur'ān. They proliferated Hadīth, and rendered sterling services in the field of rectifying beliefs, actions and customs.¹

The 15th century is now hovering over the entire world. Even if the Islamic world was to lose this vast capital; its creedal, academic, political, natural and human resources and capabilities; powerful movements, many independent countries and vast sultanates to which I made brief references, even then there was no need to despair of Allāh's mercy. This is

¹ *The Fifteenth Century*, p. 29.

because it still has with it the Qur'ān and this last and eternal religion (Islam) through which dead and despondent hearts have been revived in every century; and miracles have still been displayed.

Furthermore, Muslims are the only refuge for the hopes of humanity because they are the custodians of Allāh's final message. This century could well bring with it such a decisive turn which has an impact on the entire human race. We must never despair of Allāh's mercy. Humanity has reached the pits of degradation and humiliation. This is the time when divine mercy, in fact, divine pride comes into motion and a major revolution takes place in the world.

Western civilization is experiencing a total eclipse. It is not living on the basis of its capabilities and right to life. Rather, because – unfortunately – no other civilization is ready to take its place. All the other civilizations and cultures which we have today, those which toe the Western line and are hazy pictures of the original are so weak and defeated that they cannot stand face to face against it. If the Islamic countries and the world of Islam can collectively develop the ability to fill this vacuum which will result with the demise of Western civilization, leadership of the world could be given to it once again. It is the same leadership which – in line with Allāh's norm – has always been conferred to a vibrant, strong

and fresh nation or rule. The leaders will now have to decide whether it is better to bear Western deception eternally with a beggar's bowl, or whether it was the lofty position of steering the world and guiding humanity which, after prophet-hood, is the highest accolade and greatest glory. Does the sacrifice of outward name and fame, position and authority, pleasures and comforts, material and physical desires have any reality? Even if a hundred lives are sacrificed for it, it would be a good bargain. It is not a matter of profit and loss. [A poet says]:

O heart! There is nothing but profit in the business of love. The loss of one life is not such a serious loss.

I conclude my short appraisal and sincere message with those energizing couplets of Iqbāl:

O builder of the Haram! Rise to reconstruct the world anew. Awake from your deep slumber and rise again.

A Ten-Point Plan for the Islamic World

From the reasons and causes of the Islamic reawakening in the 7th and 10th centuries as explained previously, it will be correct for us to conclude that every era of Islamic society needs Allāh-fearing, truthful, vigilant and courageous reformers and preachers who are able to undertake the task of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā*, reforming and strengthening

the souls in the most trying and adverse conditions and circumstances.

At a time when Muslim countries are being plundered and there is a blind race to accumulate worldly riches, these reformers must be able to pick up the fallen hearts, connect them to Allāh *ta'ālā*, and occupy themselves in the task of developing fresh īmān and conviction, love and fear of Allāh, and reliance and trust in Him. They must be able to teach people to move away from base objectives to a life of loftiness. Scorn for worldly wealth and possessions must be firmly embedded in their hearts. They must be able to rise above stooping before wealth, power and authority; and from selling their own countries and peoples for worldly gain. They must be prepared to sacrifice themselves for their creed and principles, and ignite the desire for martyrdom in Allāh's cause. They must be able to remove them from the pitch dark pit of hopelessness and convey them to the light of divine mercy and help. The degenerate and suffering society must be able to produce such qualified, powerful and trustworthy individuals who are able to take care of the most delicate responsibilities of the government, and be in a position to protect the Islamic borders. These are those Allāh-fearing and genuine people who – in their respective communities – are able to render services like those of Khwājah

Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* during the caliphate of the Banū Umayyah; and Hāfiz Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh*, Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* and Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qādir Jilānī *rahimahullāh* during the caliphate of the Banū ‘Abbās.

The presence of these Allāh-fearing personalities in every country and every era is a fundamental need. They are the ones who can succeed where even governments fail. Their flag of progress rises high when the lofty flags of the governments fall to the ground. The greatest danger to Islamic society is when it is totally deprived of such pure and sanctified souls. Many of the Islamic and Arab states where Allāh *ta’ālā* opened to them the doors of His sustenance and bounties are, today, experiencing a severe spiritual vacuum. It cannot be filled by vast organizations, great centres of learning, political and propagational activities, noisy slogans and loud claims to serving Islam.

Many efforts for the revival of Islam are taking place in different corners of the Muslim world. These are done in various ways in line with each one’s knowledge, experiences and demands of conditions and circumstances. While maintaining their ranks and acknowledging their usefulness, I feel the need to present a few points and clear guidelines for Islamic revival in the 15th century and to prevent Muslim society from the dangers of

further retrogression and decline. Although these points and guidelines may not be more than mere references, it is hoped that high-minded individuals and groups who are concerned about Islam and Muslims will find some light or help in them.

(1)

Giving strength to the īmān and beliefs of the Muslim masses (embers of which are certainly in their hearts), and the need to awaken their religious consciousness and set it into motion. Attaching the Muslim masses to Islam and instilling them with a passion for it (even if it is a result of conditions and incidents). At present, Muslims are so firmly attached and affiliated to Islam that many Muslim (or claimants to Islam) rulers and governments do not have the courage to openly follow the course of unbelief or to convey their countries and peoples to unbelief and apostasy. Despite all those conspiracies and organized plots which are internally or externally plotted in order to reduce the influence of Islam, it is still thriving in those countries and is – in some way or the other – active and dynamic. Allāh forbid, if this attachment is broken, and the Muslim masses' spiritual and emotional bond with Islam is severed, then there is no guarantee for the continued existence and preservation of Islam in those countries. Subsequently, nothing will be able to stop the

leaderships and governments to reduce their countries to another Spain and Turkistan.

The masses are like a soft and fertile land from which every type of natural resource can be obtained, every type of fruit can be acquired, and building constructed. They are the raw material from which the best human products can be manufactured. Despite the many defects and failings, this is that body of humanity on which the attention of the Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the efforts of the men of Allāh were spent. Even today, they surpass other human groups and religious groups in the purity of their hearts, their love and passion for Islam, their selflessness and their abilities to make sacrifices.

However, together with this is the need for the Muslim masses and citizens of Muslim countries to develop those qualities and strive to adopt that Islamic character through which humanity becomes eligible for divine help, success and victory; and due to which the mountains of opposition and obstacles are turned to dust. For example, correct beliefs, pure tauhīd (which is protected against the slightest taint of polytheism), Islamic character and an Islamic society (which is pure from ignorant customs and practices, and the blind emulation of non-Muslim nations).

It is also necessary for Muslim society to be purified from the illness of hypocrisy and that contradiction which has crept into it since quite some time, and which negates the original Islamic teachings and ideal Muslim society. Similarly, efforts have to be made to save it from those characteristics, habits, and carnal effects of wealth and power due to which many nations of the past Prophets became eligible for punishment and divine wrath. In like manner, efforts must be made to protect it from the moral leprosy which has afflicted Western nations and in which they are immersed, and which they are now trying their utmost to spread into Eastern nations, especially Muslim countries.

This reformational work will remain unfinished and its results will not be realized as long as a correct religious consciousness is not developed in the Muslims, and their minds are not moulded correctly. It is essential for them to have a correct understanding of facts and issues, and the ability to differentiate between friend and foe. Their insight must be so mature and their religious understanding so deep that they are not deluded by subtle political schemes, political parties and slogan mongering. There should be no recurrence of those tragedies through which mighty Muslim peoples and countries were swept away in the whirlwinds of ignorant nationalism, or

linguistic and cultural chauvinism; succumbed to cunning leaders and foreign conspiracies due to their simplicity and naivety.

(2)

Religious facts and Qur'ānic definitions, and a correct understanding and comprehension of Islam must be protected against all types of distortions. Extreme caution must be practised in trying to make Islam subservient to modern and western concepts, political and economic systems, presenting a purely political interpretation of Islam, and in trying to bring it on the level of modern philosophies and political systems. This is because government and authority, and philosophical systems continually change. On the other hand, religious realities and facts, and a correct creed of Islam are the foundations of Islam. This is a point where the beginning and end are interlinked. The Prophets *'alayhimus salām* called to this in their respective times, and their entire striving and efforts were focused on this path. In like manner, caution is essential on every such thing which is not founded on "belief in the Hereafter", whose acquisition results in a weakness in the desire to acquire Allāh's pleasure, a waning in the spirit of *īmān* and Allāh-consciousness, and does not have proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā* as its fundamental objective. Any form of education, training and

interpretation which reduces the abhorrence of the idolatry of the jāhiliyyah period (which is still alive today) and of general polytheistic acts and its manifestations, which causes the mind to revive the era of jāhiliyyah can never be tolerated. Iqbāl rightly said:

The believer may be aging but Lāt and Manāt¹ are still young.

(3)

An effort must be made to develop and maintain a spiritual and emotional attachment to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to create a deep-seated love for him in Muslim society. It must be a love which makes him more beloved than one's wife, family and even one's own self. As per authentic Aḥādīth, this is the demand and sign of īmān. It must be impressed on the minds of people and they must be fully convinced that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is the seal of all Prophets. Muslims must abstain from all such influences which put an end to the sources of this love, and which weaken the desire to practise on the Sunnah, emulate Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and study his noble life. It was this attachment and deep bond which enabled

¹ Names of two idols which were held in high regard by pre-Islamic Arabs.

non-Arab nations to remain attached to Islam and to be protected from being absorbed by non-Islamic cultures and nationalities.

This point is especially important for the Arab countries where the Arab nationalistic movements of the recent past, the books of Christian and Jewish writers, and modern Arab writers whose element of love [for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] was weak or they were alien to the high rank of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. They have become so weak in this regard that a new imān-inspiring Islamic literature is needed to revive and rekindle the love for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The situation which prevails in these [Arab] countries has prompted a non-Arab lover of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – Iqbāl – to say:

From the land of love I bring a new army,
because the Ḥaram is in danger from the
revolt of the intellect.

(4)

The Muslim educated class and those who are holding leading academic positions and controlling the media have assumed that Islam has lost all its power. Islam's steering role in every era, facing new challenges, solving new problems and the ability to convey humanity to its destination have – due to incorrect education and the influence of Western

thought – either ended or become shaken. This educated class has imposed on itself to think that Islam is a “battery” which has lost its power, a lamp whose oil is finished and whose wick has burnt out. The need now is to rekindle in its [educated class] heart confidence in Islam and the fact that it is a universal and vibrant message which does not distinguish between language and place. It plays the role of the ship of Nūḥ *‘alayhis salām* which is the only thing that can save humanity from drowning.

The total absence or weakening of this confidence in the educated class is its fundamental illness which is the catalyst for most of its measures and “improvements” against Islam, and the reason for that mental apostasy which has enveloped the entire Muslim world at present. It is also the reason for the deep and wide gulf which exists between the rulers and the Muslim masses, and which is not being filled in any way. This has resulted in a severe mental, cultural and social conflict in those countries which occasionally results in rebellions and revolutions.

(5)

A fundamental change in the curriculum and system of education in Muslim countries, and its reshaping so that it is in line with the position, value, message, obligations and objectives of those

countries. And which is in no way whatsoever imported from any foreign country or school of thought. Rather, it must be a product of the deep and intensive studies of Muslim education experts; a deep and comprehensive understanding of Islam, and based on insight and experience. It must be above and free from the self-innovated barriers of ancient and modern knowledge, and Western and Eastern sciences. This is a most urgent and essential task which can tolerate no delay whatsoever. Without it, the Muslim countries will not be able to stand on their own feet, apply their own minds nor administer their countries with determination and free will. Neither will their centres of learning, literature and media be able to fulfil their responsibilities according to the spirit of Islam and the needs of society.

(6)

To develop a powerful and universal academic and research movement which can create a bond between our new generation with Islam's past academic treasure, blow a new spirit into Islamic sciences, and is able to prove this fact that Islamic law and jurisprudence is an extremely wide and progressive law. And that it is established on such eternal principles which can never be spoiled by time, it has the full capacity to move along with the changes and progresses in life, and in whose presence there is no

need to take recourse to any man-made laws. This is the revivalist work of the present age which can protect the Muslim countries and Muslim society from mental and cultural apostasy, and stop the tide of western onslaughts which are presently inundating the Muslim world.

(7)

To make efforts for the precedence and distinctiveness of Islamic culture in the Muslim countries and Muslim society. It is this Islamic culture which incorporates the principles and objectives of Islam, purity and chastity, equilibrium, sound temperament, Qur'ānic teachings, the example of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the Islamic lifestyle of the early centuries of Islam, and many excellent qualities of the model Islamic society. For a country and people to remain attached to beliefs and acts of worship alone, and to distance itself from that culture which falls under those religious teachings and wide-ranging and comprehensive principles, and for it to adopt a foreign culture, confine religion to places of worship and religious rituals – all this is synonymous to taking those countries to a cultural and societal apostasy.

As for those Muslim countries which are under the influence of Western culture, the conspiracy of the foreign intellectuals has succeeded fully there. Apart from a

few acts of worship and salient features of Islam, those countries have fully adopted foreign influences. Starting from the government registers and coming down to every department of life, from private houses to hotels – it is sometimes difficult to recognize whether we are in a Muslim country or a purely Western country. In order to maintain their cultural identity and a vibrant and powerful bond with Islam, it is necessary for the peculiar Islamic culture and lifestyle which was created by Islam to reassert itself because culture is interlinked with life.

(8)

A critical need of the Muslim world today is an intellectual leadership which can combat Western culture with courage, confidence and creative thinking; and to pave a new path for the different forms of modern culture, ways of thinking, and *modus operandi*. It must be a path which is free from blind emulation, extremism and fanaticism; and it must rise above outward forms, manifestations and superficial thinking. It must be focussed on facts, realities, means of power and core values. It must not become embroiled in outward and superficial issues. Western culture and sciences must be treated as raw materials to be used to construct a new powerful culture and pattern of life which are in line with the objectives, creed, principles and morals of Islam. This is a revolutionary

task without which the Muslim world cannot realize true independence.

(9)

There are certain governments of Muslim majority countries which are at loggerheads with those of their own population who are religious and Islam-loving. They are committing a spiritual and creedal genocide against their own people. The rulers and commanders of these countries (who came to power through a military coup or some conspiracy) are wasting away the resources of their countries. Then there are leaders of Arab countries who want to make such changes to Islamic facts and concepts, and injunctions and texts of the Shari'ah which can help them in their political agendas and cover their personal failings, or be of assistance in implementing foreign plots and conspiracies. They must be made to realize that their efforts are harmful to national unity, and that they are prone to causing more confusion. These are efforts which failed in every Muslim country. They should rather be made to focus on those objectives which will be genuinely and truly beneficial to the country, and which will serve as means for its preservation and safety.

Similarly, those Muslim countries and rulers who have a love for Islam must be encouraged to promulgate the laws of the

Shari'ah, and a suitable environment must be created to this end. They must be convinced into believing that if they make these changes, they will certainly get victory and Allāh's help, and that it will result in happiness and blessings in society.

In addition to this, efforts must be made towards the establishment of a central leadership in the Muslim world which is founded on the Islamic principle of "mutual consultation". At present, the least we can do is express sorrow and remorse over the fact that the Muslim world is deprived of the most essential institution and blessed system of the caliphate. It is an institution which the Muslims are duty-bound to establish. We are paying the price for its absence in various ways.

(10)

Islam has to be presented to purely non-Muslim countries in an impressive and rational manner. The call to Islam must be made in line with the Islamic spirit and in accordance with the demands of time and the temperament of those countries. The absence of a true religion, genuine spiritual and moral education, and the failure of modern culture have created wonderful opportunities for Islam in those countries. A vast field for its propagation is found there.

As for countries which have minority Muslim populations, the Muslims there must make independent and self-sufficient arrangements for the religious education of their children, and the preservation of their personal law. They have to be vigilant with regard to new laws and demonstrate resoluteness. There is a need for them to focus on filling the vacuum in the moral leadership of those countries. Muslims alone can fill this vacuum through which they can not only prove their usefulness and worth, but rescue those falling societies, reconstruct them, and become beloved and respected leaders. They will be serving Islam in this way and paving the way for the honour of Muslims and the rest of the population having confidence in them. Certain political conditions and recent history had made this path extremely arduous, if not sealed it off completely.

At the beginning of this new century, history – in fact, humanity – is looking for such personalities who will fulfil these needs of not only Islam but of the present age. They must take such innovative and courageous steps which change the course of history. The wise, open-minded and open-hearted historians of time are holding their pens in their hands to record the achievements of these personalities in bold writing, and to pay tribute to those who render these services.

Note: By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, these are most important points which need to be borne in mind. In fact, there is a severe need to put them into practice and to apply them. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. (compiler)

QUOTATIONS FROM: MĪR KĀ RAWĀ¹

An Islamic Solution to Important Challenges Facing the World

I think it will be most appropriate to quote an important speech of Maulānā in this regard. It was delivered to the intelligentsia, men of letters, and individuals who had an insight into the challenges and issues facing us at present. The original topic of this speech was *al-Qaḍāyā al-Insāniyyah Wa Ḥulūluhā al-Islāmīyyah* (an Islamic solution to challenges facing humanity). This topic was given to Maulānā by the director of Saudi Radio (Shaykh Muḥammad Shaṭā Marḥūm). Maulānā had written a speech on this topic which was to be broadcast over radio. Its title was then changed to *Min Ghār Ḥirā* (from the cave of Ḥirā). Maulānā presented it in his own unique style. When it was published with some of his other speeches and writings, Dr. Aḥmad ash-Sharbāsī Marḥūm, a professor at Azhar University, wrote a short note on his impressions.

A translation of the speech is presented below.

I climbed Mt. Nūr and stood at the entrance of the cave which is well-known as *Ḥirā*'. On reaching here, I thought to

¹ Written by Maulānā 'Abdullāh 'Abbās Nadwī *rahimahullāh*.

myself: This is where Allāh *ta'ālā* honoured Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* with messenger-ship and sent the first revelation to him. From here the sun rose, and whose rays poured a new light and a new life to the world. The world welcomes a new morning every day. But in most cases, there is neither any novelty in that morning nor any unusualness. Nor is every morning a good and happy morning. Very often, man wakes up in the morning but humanity does not wake up. The physical bodies wake up, but not the hearts and souls. How many dark days and false dawns we had to experience in the history of the world!? But from this cave, a true dawn appeared, whose light illuminated everything and whose arrival changed the course of history.

Before the arrival of this dawn, man's life was one of tightly-fastened and heavy locks which were placed on every door of his life. The mind was locked - the wise sages and philosophers failed to open it. The human conscience was locked - the orators and reformers failed to open it. The hearts were locked - the admonitory incidents in life and signs of Allāh's power failed to open them. The faculties were locked - education, training and the society could not open them. The madrasah was locked - the 'ulamā' and teachers failed to open it. The courthouse was locked - the oppressed and plaintiffs

could not open them. The family was locked - reformers and thinkers could not open it. The royal palace was locked - the oppressed nation, overworked farmer and exhausted labourer could not open it. The treasures of the wealthy and affluent people were locked - the hunger of the poor, the nakedness of the women and the crying of suckling infants could not open them.

Great reformers and senior legislators tried to open these many locks but could not open even a single one; they failed miserably. A lock can only be opened with a key which is made for that particular lock. Mankind had lost that key since many centuries. They tried to use the keys which were made by themselves, but they did not match the locks and were of no use whatsoever to them. Some of them tried to break these locks but they injured their hands and broke their tools in the process.

Now from this humble place [the cave of Hirā] on a desolate and tiny mountain which was completely cut off from the civilized world – something which the large capitals of the world, celebrated centres of learning and voluminous libraries could not achieve, was realized here. This is where Allāh *ta'ālā* favoured the world with the messenger-ship of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. In his message, the lost key returned to humanity. That key is belief in Allāh

ta'ālā, the Messenger *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the Last Day. With this one key, he opened these tight locks and locked doors one after the other. When he placed this prophetic key on the lock of the warped mind, it opened, became vibrant, was able to benefit from the signs of Allāh *ta'ālā* in the heavens and selves, to ponder over the universe and reach its Creator, to tear down the many veils and reach the Oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā*, to recognize the repugnance of polytheism, paganism, fabricated beliefs and false premises. Whereas before, he would vociferously defend every issue irrespective of whether it was right or wrong.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* placed this key on the sleeping human conscience, and it immediately came to its senses. He placed it on man's dead faculties, and they began to move and life came into them. The *nafs-e-ammārah* which prompted him to evil was converted to *nafs-e-lawwāmāh* and then to *nafs-e-muṭma'innah*.¹ Consequently, there remained no room for any falsehood to creep in, and a sin became unbearable for

¹ *Nafs-e-ammārah* – the self which prompts man towards evil.

Nafs-e-lawwāmāh – the self which reproaches/reprimands man for intending evil.

Nafs-e-muṭma'innah – the self which is at peace with Allāh *ta'ālā* for it is now free from all evil.

a person. So much so, he would go to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and confess his sin and insist on a painful punishment to be meted out to him. A woman comes to Madīnah and offers herself to be stoned to death – a torment which is worse than death. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* defers the punishment on the basis of a Shar'ī excuse. She returns to the desert where there is no police appointed to keep watch on her nor is there anyone to ensure she returns to court for the penalty. Yet, she comes back to Madīnah on time, voluntarily presents herself for the punishment and happily insists that it must be meted out to her. During the conquest of Iran, the golden crown of Chosroes comes into the hands of a poor soldier. He conceals it among his clothes in order to hide his trustworthiness from the eyes of the people. He then hands it over to his commander because this wealth belongs to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Treachery in this regard is impermissible, and at the same time, there must be no show of trustworthiness.

The hearts were locked – they accepted neither admonition nor did they have the fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*. They were neither affected nor did they soften. But when this key was placed on their hearts, they became fearful of Allāh *ta'ālā*, trembling before Him, learnt lessons from incidents and calamities, benefited from signs,

softened for the oppressed and showed affection to the weak.

When Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* placed this key on the strangulated faculties and lost capabilities of man, they ignited like a raging fire, gushed forth like flood water and followed the right course of action. Consequently, the one who was herding and tending to camels was now tending to nations, and became a khalīfah who ruled over the world – bearing all the complicated issues and responsibilities of government. The person who, until yesterday, was a chief of a village, now conquered mighty empires which were steeped in power and majesty.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* placed this key on the locked madrasah which the teachers had abandoned and the students stayed away from. The value of knowledge had dropped and the teacher was scorned. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* mentioned the honour of knowledge, and the merit of the scholar and student, the tutor and the teacher. He explained the mutual bond between religion and knowledge. Consequently, people became enthusiastic about the progress of centres of learning and knowledge. Every masjid and every house of the Muslims became a madrasah. Every Muslim became a student for his self and a teacher for others. His religion in itself became the

greatest motivation for the quest of knowledge.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* placed this key on the locked courthouse, and this resulted in every scholar becoming a just judge, and every Muslim judge became a justice-loving judge of the highest order. The Muslims themselves became the upholders of justice for Allāh's sake. When belief in Allāh *ta'ālā* and the day of Recompense was firmly entrenched, justice and fair-dealing spread, injustice and disputes ended, false testimony disappeared and oppressive laws ceased.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* placed this key on the locked family in which niggardliness had become common between father and son, brothers and brothers, and husband and wife. This spread from the limited circle of the family to the society at large. It manifested itself between the master and his servant, the ruler and his subjects, and the seniors and juniors. Each one was demanding his rights, but no one was prepared to fulfil his duties and responsibilities. They all became treacherous in their dealings: when they purchased a weighed or measured item, they ensured they received their full due. But when they sold a weighed or measured item, they did their utmost to give as little as they could.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam untied all these knots in society with the same key. He planted the seed of *īmān* in the family, warned of Allāh's *ta'ālā* chastisement, and read this instruction of Allāh *ta'ālā*:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا.

*O people! Continually fear your Sustainer Who created you from one soul and created from it its mate, and out of the two He spread out many men and women. Continually fear Allāh through Whom you ask of one another, and be mindful of your relatives. Surely Allāh is watchful over you.*¹

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam placed certain responsibilities on every member of the family and society. He said:

Each one of you is a guardian and each one of you is answerable for his charge. The leader is a guardian and is answerable for his charge. The man is a guardian over his family and is answerable for his charge. The woman is a guardian over her husband's house and is answerable for her charge. The servant

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 1.

is a guardian over his master's wealth and is answerable for his charge. So each of you is a guardian, and each one of you is answerable for his charge.¹

In this way, he established a family based on justice, mutual love and steadfastness; and a just society. He instituted in every member of society a deep perception of trustworthiness and a terrifying fear of the Hereafter to the extent that the rulers and people of authority became abstinent and led lives of simplicity. The leader of the nation became its servant. The guardian of the ummat became like a guardian of an orphan – if the guardian was wealthy, he abstained from the orphan's wealth; but if he was poor, he ate of it according to necessity.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* turned his attention to the wealthy and the businessmen. He made them abstinent with regard to matters of this world and desirous of the Hereafter. He taught them that wealth essentially belongs to Allāh *ta'ālā*, He merely made them His deputies in controlling it. He read the following verses to them:

وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ

¹ al-Bukhārī: 2751. Muslim, *Kitāb al-Imārah*: 20

Spend of that which He has made you trustees.¹

وَأَتَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ

Give them of the wealth of Allāh which He gave you.²

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ
النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ^ط وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ
وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا فَبَشِّرُهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ. يَوْمَ
يُجْحَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ ^ط
هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ لَا نَفْسَكُمْ فَدُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ.

O believers! Many of the scholars and dervishes of the People of the Book devour the wealth of the people wrongfully and they hinder [others] from the path of Allāh. Those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the path of Allāh, give them glad tidings of a painful punishment. On [that] day their wealth shall be heated in the fire of Hell, and with it shall be branded their foreheads, sides and backs. [They will be told:] “This is what you had hoarded up for yourselves. Now taste what you have been hoarding.”³

¹ Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 7.

² Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 33.

³ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 34-35.

Through his message and call, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam produced an individual who was righteous, who believed in Allāh *ta'ālā* and feared His retribution. This individual was humble and trustworthy, gave preference to the Hereafter over this world and scorned materialism – overpowering it with his *īmān* and spiritual strength. He firmly believed the world was created for him while he was created for the Hereafter. When such an individual entered the world of trade and business, he was an honest and trustworthy businessman. If he was a poor man, he was an honourable man who exerted himself. If he was a labourer, he was hard working and gave good advice. If he was wealthy, he was generous and saw to the well-being of others. If he was a judge, he was just and understanding. If he was a governor, he was devoted and trustworthy. If he was a ruler, he was unassuming and merciful. If he was an attendant or hired labourer, he was fully capable and trustworthy. If he was put in charge of the public treasury, he was observant and cautious of how he spent.

These were the bricks on which the Islamic society stood and the Islamic government was established. The society and government were – on a larger scale – a manifestation of the character, psychology and lifestyle of the individual. The qualities which were found in the

individuals were collectively found in the society. It was a righteous and trustworthy society which gave preference to the Hereafter over this world. It overpowered materialism and was not dictated by it. The honesty and trustworthiness of the trader, the abstinence and striving of the poor, the hard labour and good counsel of the labourer, the generosity and concern of the rich, the justice and wisdom of the judge, the devotion and trustworthiness of the governor, the humility and mercy of the ruler, the strength of the attendant, and the vigilance of the treasurer were transferred to it.

Just as the society was a manifestation of the excellent qualities of its individuals, the Islamic government also combined all these qualities. In fact, it had become a strong catalyst for them. It gave preference to principles over profits and guidance over taxation. The effect of this society and the influence of this government resulted in a life which was entirely filled with īmān and good deeds, honesty and sincerity, hard work and striving, justice in receiving and giving, equity with one's self and with others.

I was thinking all these thoughts in my heart while standing at the entrance of the cave of Hirā'. I became so immersed in my thoughts that I became totally unaware of my self. My imagination caused me to be separated from my

present world. The general Islamic life of the first era came as a scene before me with all its beauty and minute details as though I was literally seeing them. I felt as if I was breathing its spiritually-filled air.

While imagining that world, my thoughts returned to the real world in which I was breathing and in which we are living. I said to my self: I see new locks on the doors of a successful and wholesome life. Life has traversed many stations and took many major steps. This has caused it to become complicated and twisted. Many new and diverse issues have cropped up. I asked my self: Is it possible to open these new locks with that old and ancient key?

Although this question came to my mind, I refused to make a decision until I tested these locks thoroughly and placed the key on them. When I touched and checked these locks, I realized that they were the same old locks, but only of a different colour. The problems we are facing today are the same as those experienced before. The greatest problem and the most fundamental challenge is that of the individual who is still the brick with which the society and the government is built. The condition of the individual at present is that he believes in nothing but materialism and power. He is not prepared to accept anything else. He has no concern except for his self and his desires. He has placed too much of value

in this life. His worship of his self and pleasing his desires have gone beyond the limits. His bond with his Allāh, with the message of the Prophets, and belief in the Hereafter have been totally severed. Thus, it is this very individual who is the source of the wretchedness of civilization.

If this individual engages in trade, he is most selfish and engages in stockpiling – he withholds his goods when they are cheap and releases them when they are expensive. In this way, he is a cause of hunger and stress for the masses.

If this individual is poor, he is a revolting poor who tries to remove his poverty through the toiling of others and to freely eat the fruits of others while he himself must not experience any fatigue in the process.

If this individual is a labourer, he falls short in carrying out his responsibilities and duties but still demands his pay in full.

If this individual is a wealthy person, he is the most stingy and hard-hearted. He possesses neither mercy nor kindness.

If he is a governor, he proves to be a cheat who usurps the wealth of others.

If he is a leader, he is oppressive and self-seeking who looks at nothing except his own benefits and comforts.

If he is a servant, he is treacherous and most lazy in carrying out his duties.

If he is a treasurer, he is a thief who embezzles and misappropriates wealth.

If he is a president, minister or prime minister, he is materialistic and monopolistic – serving none but his own self and his party, and bothering about no one else.

If he is a leader, he is nationalistic and clannish. He worships his country and clan, while trampling over other countries and nations for the progress of his own country and clan.

If he is a legislator, he promulgates oppressive laws and imposes burdensome taxes on the poor and hungry masses.

If he is an inventor, he invents destructive weapons and explosives.

If he is a scientist, he discovers poisonous gases which completely annihilate nations, and the atom bomb which destroys people, animals, crops and plantations without distinction.

If this individual has the authority to use these destructive weapons, he will see nothing wrong in casting bombs on nations and countries, rendering vibrant and populated places completely ravaged and desolate.

In short, no matter where he is and in what condition, his sole concern is about

himself, his family and children, his party and his group. He does not see profit and loss in anything else. A single person is prepared to kill and destroy thousands of humans in the most inhuman ways merely for the gratification of his desires. A society which gives rise to such individuals will not be a human society; it will prove to be a society of animals. These are the severely wounded individuals of society or the government. When individuals are enemies of their fellow humans, the entire society will become a human killer. Instead of challenges and problems being solved, they will become more and more complex. When one knot is untied another will take its place. When one illness is treated, twenty others will develop. When poison is used to treat a poison, it will inevitably result in death. This material worship or carnal worship is the cause of every other complexity, evil and illness which we refer to as the challenges of human life.

The treatment for all this, and the Islamic solution for all these challenges is the construction of the individual lifestyle which can never be completed without belief in Allāh *ta'ālā*, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the Last Day.

WHAT THE WORLD LOST BY THE DECLINE OF MUSLIMS

This book [*Mādhā Khasara al-‘Ālam bi Inhiṭāt al-Muslimīn*] is Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā Sāhib Nadwī’s magnum opus which was most well-received by the Arab world. Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbās Sāhib Nadwī writes in his *Mīr Kā Rawā* with reference to it:

This book was first received by erudite scholars, the intelligentsia and experts in the Islamic sciences of the Muslim world. Up to now, it has gone through more than 70 editions which were published with the permission of publishers, and many more which were published without permission. A scholar at Damascus University even wrote his Ph.D. thesis on this book. No educated person is considered to be worthy of his position if he has not read it.

The following quotation from *Mādhā Khasara al-‘Ālam bi Inhiṭāt al-Muslimīn* is with reference to the first chapter of this book:

The first chapter of the book presents a picture of the “universal ignorance”. Scholars who write on the biography of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam generally commence with a reference to the creedal and practical weaknesses and failings of the people of Makkah or some Arab tribes before the commissioning of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as a Prophet. For example, economic

injustices, moral evils and anarchy are described in some detail. They also describe the evil Arab practices of female infanticide, thieving and highway robbery, consumption of wine and gambling, mutual wars, long and protracted habit of exacting revenge, and so on.

The author of *Mādhā Khasara* did not confine himself to the Arabs; rather he presented the moral degeneration of the entire human race. He presents the jāhilī system which prevailed in the entire world in the light of events and facts so that the extent to which humanity had fallen and was on the brink of a universal suicide and self-destruction could be gauged. It may also be learnt that when the Qur'ān addresses the Arabs in the following verse, it was not the condition of the Arabs alone but of the entire world. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ

*You were on the brink of a pit of fire.*¹

This demonstrates the obstructive conditions in which Islam made its appearance, and that the task of a revival of humanity was a colossal and complicated task.

In order to prove this reality, one does not find in a single place so much of

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 103.

information as found in *Mādhā Khasara*. This is because no one before even gave thought to this point that jāhiliyyah was not confined to the regions of the Arab tribes but extended to the entire world. Thus, the stories of moral degeneration and human destruction for each continent – in fact, each country – were obtained from various sources, required many years of study, the literature of different languages had to be read, and facts about different cultures, civilizations, customs and festivals had to be sourced and collated. This was a mammoth task which required intense toiling.

It could not have been accomplished without Allāh-bestowed inspiration and assistance. The author had to comb through libraries to fulfil the right of this chapter. This rare chapter of this book and its subject matter have not been seen collectively in one place.¹

¹ *Mīr Kā Rawā*, p. 480.

EXTRACTS FROM: MAULĀNĀ ABUL HASAN 'ALĪ NADWĪ IN THE EYES OF SENIOR SCHOLARS

Maulānā Mamshād 'Alī Qāsimī Sāhib demonstrates the high rank and esteem which Hadrat Maulānā enjoyed in the eyes of senior scholars and elders as gauged from the letters and statements of these seniors. A few are quoted here. Allāh willing, they will prove to be enlightening to the reader and will increase his admiration for Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh*.

Meetings and Correspondence with King Fayṣal

King Fayṣal ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Sa'ūd, the former king of Saudi Arabia needs no introduction. He was a man of chaste qualities and unique attributes. He is listed among the great personalities of history. The champion of Islamic unity, King Fayṣal Shahīd was matchless as regards his thinking and views, intelligence, far-sightedness and sharp wittedness. This great and magnanimous king used to pay special respect to the Ahlullāh, scholars and thinkers. He appreciated their useful words of counsel and sincere suggestions, and would give due importance to them.

Despite the differences in age and rank between Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Sāhib Nadwī and King Fayṣal, they went beyond personal motives and objectives, and had a special bond of sincerity, love and confidence.

Hadrat Maulānā was always cautious about meeting and intermingling with kings, ministers and state

dignitaries and officers; and always kept his distance from them. Apart for religious and community needs, he never paid any attention to them.

However, due to their religious temperament and Islamic self-pride, Hadrat Maulānā had a special affinity with two powerful leaders of their time, viz. King Fayṣal of Saudi Arabia and General Muḥammad Diyā' al-Haq, the prime minister of Pakistan. He always supplicated in their favour and would mention them in his assemblies with much love and respect.

Hadrat Maulānā first met King Fayṣal in 1963 in Madīnah Munawwarah when he was the prime minister of Saudi Arabia and the heir to the throne. Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn 'Abdillāh al-Bāz (who was the vice-chancellor of Madīnah University) at the time was instrumental in organizing a private meeting between Hadrat Maulānā and King Fayṣal. The gist of this first meeting is described by Hadrat Maulānā in *Kārwān-e-Zindagī* as follows:

I expressed my fear to King Fayṣal that the Kingdom, especially the sanctified Hijāz, is being taken on the path of the modern Arab states. Certain plans and plots are being schemed whereby there is the fear that the objectives of visiting the Haramayn Sharīfayn, their unique status as Islamic cities and their sanctity are in danger of being affected. He listened attentively to what I had to say and expressed his kingdom's precautions and good intentions as regards the delineation and demarcation of the Hijāz. He assured me that he will not permit any such thing

which would contradict the rank and message of the centre of Islam.

Subsequently, when he ascended the throne, I wrote a detailed letter to him. The fundamental idea which I expressed was that the Hijāz enjoys a special identity as regards its geographical position and its message. It is essential to safeguard it in every era. No revivalist and progressive step will be tolerated, and no welfare work is permissible which would cause the least damage to its identity and objectives.

Thereafter another letter was written in which it was clearly stated that to provide the means and opportunities for a populace to live a life of idleness and inactivity; and through this, to cause it to be unmindful and negligent towards keeping the government in check, changing and reforming the conditions has proved to be unsuccessful ever since the era of the Banū Umayyah to this day. This class of people which has an abundance of wealth and seems to have no time to think about anything else becomes the most dissatisfied, ungrateful and unappreciative class. Rebellion and insurgency starts from people of this class. On the other hand, it is really the religious-minded class which proves to be reliable and loyal.

The king wrote a reply to this letter on 9 Safar 1385 A.H. (11 June 1965) and

signed it. Apart from this, I met him privately on one occasion in Jeddah and once in Makkah Mu'azzamah. I expressed my fears and concerns, and he clarified his government's stance. I was most impressed and continued to be impressed by the king's extraordinary intelligence, forbearance, sound character and simplicity.

Hadrat Maulānā writes in one article:

I met him on one occasion when he was the heir-apparent and prime minister. I drew his attention to certain events related to planning and aspects related to education and training in the Hijāz. I spoke to him in privacy in an air of mutual confidence and respect. I met him on several occasions after he ascended the throne and had many conversations with him. Our conversations were always confined to the conditions in his country, present needs, future expectations, organizations and different departments. He too perceived this and appreciated the fact that these meetings were not held for personal reasons, not because of my association with any institution, nor to derive any benefit from him for some collective project. He truly appreciated this by virtue of his Allāh-bestowed intelligence (an example of which is very rare). There were times when if I did not make an effort and the time to meet him,

he would make references to the need for a meeting.¹

King Fayṣal was matchless in his intelligence, far-sightedness and the ability to identify men of worth. He loved Hadrat Maulānā, had respect for him, held him in high regard, and appreciated his words of counsel because he knew fully well – through his insightfulness and extensive means of information – that whatever Hadrat Maulānā said was solely for Allāh *ta'ālā*, and for the general benefit of Islam and the Muslims. He knew for a fact that Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib was far beyond and above personal motives and objectives.

King Fayṣal recognized this valuable quality in Hadrat Maulānā because he was after all a king and a man of insight. It was based on this respect and confidence that Hadrat Maulānā could advise him in privacy and write letters to him, while he would listen attentively and reply to his letters with much love and appreciation.

Two letters of King Fayṣal addressed to Hadrat Maulānā are quoted here. They are true reflections of the confidence, respect, love and affinity which he had for Hadrat Maulānā; and a display of how great personalities had love for each other for Allāh's sake.

First Letter

The most distinguished Shaykh Abul Hasan 'Alī al-Hasanī an-Nadwī *may Allāh ta'ālā protect him*.

I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* for your good health, safety, and for every type of goodness.

¹ *Purāne Chirāgh*, vol. 2, p. 128.

I received your letter dated 15/12/1384 A.H. and learned of the thoughts which you expressed. I thank you for your pure perceptions and feelings. Together with appreciating your Islamic and religious pride and self-respect, I would like to convince you that I never permitted such a thing nor can I ever permit such a thing which is in conflict with our pure Dīn and its pure teachings.

I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to inspire us to do things which will be for the good of our Dīn, which will elevate its status, and to enable the Muslims to unite on doing things in which there is good for their religious and worldly life. May Allāh protect and preserve you.

Faysal ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Āl Sa'ūd
09/02/1385 A.H.¹

Second Letter

The most distinguished Shaykh Abul Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ḥasanī an-Nadwī *may Allāh ta'ālā protect him*.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I received your letter dated 27 Rajab 1387 A.H. We appreciate your pure sentiments and Islamic emotions. We wish to convince you that we have a spiritual bond with our Indian brothers regarding whose sincerity and love we do not have the slightest doubt. They have not been stopped from working here nor have any instructions been issued to stop them. The news which you received is incorrect. We cannot differentiate between Muslims from one place and another. They are all our brothers and all are treated as brothers.

¹ Quoted from *Ta'mīr-e-Ḥayāt*, 25 November 1990.

I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to inspire us to do things which would elevate Islam and unite the Muslims. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect and preserve you.

Faysal ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz

5/7/1387 A.H.¹

Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mubārak

After completing his studies in the Islamic sciences, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Mubārak al-Jazā'irī obtained a degree in law from the Syrian University. He proceeded to Paris where he studied French. He was a professor in the College of Literature and College of Sharī'ah in the Syrian University. He then became active in politics, was victorious in the elections and was appointed as the Minister of Labour, Communications and Agriculture. The conditions in Syria eventually forced him to leave the country and seek asylum in Saudi Arabia where he was appointed as a professor at King 'Abd al-'Azīz University. He wrote several important books. He passed away on 15 Ṣafar 1402 A.H.

This august personality had immense confidence in and love for Ḥaḍrat Maulānā. This can be gauged from his letters. Two of the shaykh's letters are quoted here to serve as examples.

First Letter

To my honourable brother Ustādh Abul Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ḥasanī an-Nadwī, *may Allāh protect and preserve him.*

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

¹ Quoted from *Ta'mīr-e-Ḥayāt*, 25 November 1990.

Meeting you in Damascus was a most wonderful opportunity for me. You must have perceived that the special love which I have for you is not for any other thinker and scholar, even though I respect them all and have love for them. I hope that Allāh *ta'ālā* will place me in the shade of His mercy with you on the day of Resurrection.

Muhammad al-Mubārak
16 Ramaḍān 1384 A.H.

Second Letter

To my honourable brother Ustādh Abul Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ḥasanī an-Nadwī, *may Allāh protect and preserve him.*

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Allāh is witness to the fact that my sins, shortcomings and misfortune are the reasons for your inattention. I castigated and reprimanded myself because I consider your kindness and attention to be from among the causes of Allāh's pleasure. This is my belief and conviction; I am not saying it as a formality or merely to make you happy.

At present, I do not consider anyone to be of your status and rank. My confidence in you is of such a level that I continually think to myself that on the day of Resurrection you will be in front of me, I will call out to you, and I will hold on firmly to you. This thought came to my mind many times but I did not mention it to you.

Your brother
Muhammad al-Mubārak
Umm Darmān Islamic University
Umm Darmān

P.O. Box 283
Sudan

Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib

Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib – the illustrious son of Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib *rahimahullāh* – said on several occasions in the presence of many personalities that his father used to say that Hadrat Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Miyā Sāhib is divinely inspired by Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The worldwide popularity and recognition which Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā' received by virtue of Hadrat Maulānā is in itself a golden chapter in the academic history of the Muslim world. In addition to this, he gave to Nadwah an eternal gift through which its greatness, recognition, reliability and respect multiplied many times. A more detailed appraisal flowed from the equitable pen of Maulānā Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib after his visit to Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. He writes:

Many great hopes came up and my confidence increased when I experienced the academic and religious environment of Nadwah. As per the words of Akbar Marḥūm, Nadwah has always been the vigilant and alert tongue of the Muslims. However, the deficiency of a painful and pining spiritual heart has been filled by Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan Nadwī Sāhib *mudda zilluhu*.

The effects of the concern, farsightedness, untiring efforts, and pain of Hadrat Maulānā ‘Alī Miyā are clearly observed. It feels as though Hadrat Maulānā (‘Alī Miyā) has given a new life to this institution.¹

Shaykh Mustafā as-Sibā’ī

Hadrat Maulānā was invited by Damascus University to come there as a lecturer.

Shaykh Dr. Mustafā as-Sibā’ī Sāhib is a famous scholar, lecturer, writer and leader. He is the author of the widely received *as-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī at-Tashrī’ al-Islāmī* (the status of the Sunnah is Islamic law). He was also the chief editor of the periodical *Hadārah al-Islam*. In addition to this, he was an Islamic leader and consultant on Islamic issues in the Syrian parliament, and a professor of law at Damascus University. He was chiefly responsible for the establishment of the College of Sharī’ah in the same university. Dr. Shaykh Mustafā as-Sibā’ī Sāhib took a personal and direct part in the jihād in Palestine. He genuinely acknowledged Hadrat Maulānā’s academic loftiness and truly valued him. We quote the historical letter which he wrote in 1955 to Hadrat Maulānā in which he invites him to come to Damascus University as a lecturer. The love and esteem with which he held Hadrat Maulānā can be gauged from this letter.

To the distinguished Shaykh Abul Hasan ‘Alī an-Nadwī, *may Allāh ta’ālā protect him.*

¹ *Jahān-e-Dīdah.*

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

You are probably aware of the fact that the College of Islamic Shari‘ah has been established at the Damascus University in Syria. Muslims and defenders of the truth are all overjoyed by this step taken by the university.

The committee of the College expressed its desire to me and is also hopeful of your acceptance with regard to inviting you to come over as a lecturer for one or two years – depending on what you agree to – so that the students may benefit from your knowledge and your deep understanding of the message of Islam.

I hope you will bless my request with acceptance. Whatever conditions you lay down with regard to your salary and other arrangements will be accepted by us. I hope to receive a quick reply from you, and receive an answer which will be a realization of my hopes.

Mustafā as-Sibā‘ī
Dean of the College of Shari‘ah
Damascus
22 Shawwāl 1374 A.H./12 June 1955

Hadrat Maulānā Goes as a Visiting Professor to Damascus University

The above-quoted letter of Shaykh Mustafā as-Sibā‘ī whose every word demonstrated not only his confidence in and love for Hadrat Maulānā, but also his loyalty to him, was in reality a very great offer

which in those times (1955) no Indian scholar could easily hope for. However, the grand name of Allāh *ta'ālā* was already firmly embedded in Hadrat Maulānā's heart. He therefore replied to the letter according to his habit, i.e.

Do not seat us who are sitting on the
ground on the throne. This is an insult to
love, it is not an honour.

While the reply which Hadrat Maulānā wrote to the Shaykh's offer contained an acknowledgement of Allāh's grace and favour for this academic honour, it contained a clear expression of his independence and disavowal of a high salary, comforts and worldly honour. Hadrat Maulānā very clearly and frankly excused himself from leaving India and settling down in Syria, leaving his voluntary services at Nadwatul 'Ulamā' and taking on a formal employment at Damascus University. At the same time, he expressed his readiness to come to the university for a short period of time and to deliver pre-set lectures on a topic [decided by the university].

The university authorities considered this offer to be a boon and accepted it. The honourable Shukrī al-Qautalī who was the head of the Republic of Syria, and Ma'mūn al-Kazbarī, the Minister of Education, signed the papers which contained the appointment of Hadrat Maulānā as a visiting professor. Hadrat Maulānā proceeded to Syria and delivered his first lecture in the main hall of Damascus University on Wednesday the 4th of April 1956 at 4pm. The hall was filled to capacity and the female students were seated in the upper gallery. The topic of his lecture was *at-Tajdīd wa al-Mujaddidūn fī Tārīkh al-Fikr al-*

Islāmī – Revival and Revivers in the History of Islamic Thought.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāhib Allāhābādī

Hadrat Maulānā describes his first meeting with Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh*, his love and his hospitality as follows:

It was winter. We went by a rickshaw from Mau to Kaupāganj and then to Fatahpūr. My travelling companion, Maulwī Ashraf ‘Alī Ṣāhib Lucknowī was with. The afternoon meal was over and people were taking a siesta. We reached Fatahpūr and Maulānā learnt of our arrival immediately. He had heard my name and came down from upstairs there and then. He took me upstairs with real affection, held my hand out of love, and continued pressing it for quite some time. This was Maulānā’s special way of showing affection. He instructed for the food to be heated, the table mat was laid, and he fed me just as a mother sits down on the floor and feeds her children. He periodically made morsels of food and placed them in my mouth. I was astounded over the fact that despite my imperfection and his lofty position, he was showing such extraordinary kindness towards me.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* then settled down in Allāhābād. Hadrat Maulānā [Alī Miyā Ṣāhib] travelled to Allāhābād in 1964. He writes about this trip as follows:

I mistakenly sent a message to Maulānā informing him of our arrival. I say mistakenly because when the train stopped on the morning of the 20th of June at the Allāhābād station, I learnt that Maulānā has personally come to the station. The train reached a bit late. The moment Maulānā met me, he said: “I thought that it would be the time for tea and breakfast, so I brought these to the station. But considerable time has passed [since the time of breakfast]. So now we will have breakfast at home.” I felt most ashamed on seeing this kindness, affection and consideration. I severely regretted my mistake of informing him about my time of arrival.

Hadrat Maulānā Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* would occasionally be overcome with a spiritual condition. At such times, he would generally hold the head of the person sitting near him and shake it, and say something important. On one such occasion, he held the head of his special associate, Hadrat Sufī ‘Abd ar-Rabb Sāhib (MA), and addressed him (while shaking his head): “I have seen the heart of everyone, I have seen the heart of everyone, but I have not seen a heart as pure as that of ‘Alī Miyā.”

Maulānā Waṣīyyulāh’s Letter to Hadrat Maulānā

To my beloved, *may Allāh keep him safe.*

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Your letter brought much joy to me and was a source of additional love and devotion. Many ‘ulamā’ frequent my place, but my heart is probably most

inclined towards you. You stated that the important and blessed topic towards which I directed your attention was most beneficial for your rectification and education. We have completely disregarded and ignored this topic. On hearing it, my heart spontaneously desires to quote this couplet:

[A bird is saying]: My heart had become accustomed to the cage, but O you of a similar voice, you have brought back memories of the garden to me, and caused me to become restless.

I now request your permission to say something. I will provide details with regard to it after I receive the permission from you.

Was salām

Waṣṭiyyullāh, *may Allāh pardon him.*

Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī

There are countless incidents which demonstrate Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī's love and affection for Hadrat Maulānā. There are a large number of people who observed the bond and affinity which existed between these two personalities. We will suffice with quoting just one letter. This illustrious letter demonstrates simplicity, humility and love solely for Allāh's pleasure. The one reading this letter will himself perceive the immense love and respect with which it is filled. This one sole letter is an expression of a thousand incidents, and suffices voluminous books.

Respected, honourable, a manifestation of kindness and generosity, Hadrat Maulānā Sāhib, *may Allāh perpetuate your blessings.*

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* you are well and everyone else is well. I had sent a hand-carried letter on Hadrat's return. I then thought to myself that you probably did not receive it, so I sent a telegram. I was overjoyed when I heard of Hadrat's safe return. Subsequently I sent a reply envelope which I anxiously waited for and am still awaiting it. I did not learn about Hadrat's wellbeing, so my heart is most restless, concerned and worried. If I committed an error or did something untoward, I most humbly request Hadrat to pardon me. Hadrat probably did not receive my telegram or reply envelope. My heart is restless in this regard. I am sending Sultān al-Hudā for this purpose – to inquire about Hadrat's wellbeing and health so that I am put at ease. I am continuously making du'ā' for Hadrat in this blessed month and request du'ā' myself. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* my health in this blessed month is better than before. I continually made du'ā' for Hadrat when Hadrat embarked on a journey. Hadrat is fully aware of the deep bond and love which I have for Hadrat. I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* that nothing affects this love and that Hadrat is happy with me. I am making du'ā' with my heart and soul that Hadrat is fully cured.

Was salām

Muhammad Ahmad – the one in need of your du'ā's.

The King Faisal Award and Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muhammad Zakariyyā's Special Telegram

The King Faisal Award in the Muslim world holds a position similar to that of the Nobel Prize. This award is in remembrance of the resolute and saintly King Fayṣal, and is given to the most distinguished personality of the Islamic world. Hadrat Maulānā

received this award in 1980. He himself writes about it as follows:

I was sitting in the upstairs room of my residence (in Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh, Rāi Bareilly) and was occupied with my normal work of writing. My nephew, Muḥammad Rābī', arrived from Lucknow and informed me that the King Faisal Award has been announced in my favour, and these are the telegrams which we received containing information about the award, and congratulatory telegrams from several people. Included among them was a telegram from the head of the Award Committee, Amīr Khālīd Fayṣal ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, who invited me to come to Riyadh to receive the award. From among the congratulatory telegrams, the first one was most probably from Ḥadrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib. He was in Madīnah Munawwarah when a person informed him of what he heard over the radio. When Ḥadrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth received this information, he said: "Send a congratulatory telegram to 'Alī Miyyā immediately because I suspect he will excuse himself from accepting it. He will understand my hint when he receives my telegram."

The method of identifying who is to receive the award is that the committee requests the views of various Islamic centres, important personalities, institutions and organizations of the

Islamic world with regard to who is most eligible for the award. The decision is then made in favour of the one in whose name most of the suggestions are received.

Hadrat Maulānā Refuses to Accept the Money

The award is made up of a cash amount of 200 000 riyals, a gold medal and a certificate which lists the main services of the recipient. The award is presented in a session attended by the king, the heir-apparent, ministers, dignitaries and 'ulamā'. The selection committees met from 24 Safar 1400 A.H. (14 January 1980) to 26 Safar 1400 A.H. (16 January 1980) and the names of the recipients were decided. I received a telegram from the minister of education, Shaykh Hasan 'Abdullāh Āl ash-Shaykh, in which he stressed that I come personally to receive the award. However, I decided that I would instead send my friend, Dr. 'Abdullāh 'Abbās Nadwī, to go as my representative and receive the medal and award on my behalf. I wrote a letter to the head of the committee, in which I expressed my gratitude and wrote:

"...it would be better for people working in the service of Islam to receive their award in the Hereafter. The awarding of this prize was announced in my absence. I now have no alternative but to accept it out of respect for the deceased King Faisal (in whose name the award is made), and in appreciation of his Islamic services. I

pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to effectuate the allusion to which this award makes [i.e. to reward me in the Hereafter just as I have been rewarded in this world], the appreciation which it encompasses, and encouragement to do more good. I cannot come personally but I appoint Dr. 'Abdullāh 'Abbās Nadwī as my representative. He will accept it on my behalf and convey my salām and gratitude for me.

I added:

“This award entails two aspects: (1) Its abstract value, i.e. acknowledgement and appreciation. This I accept with much embarrassment. (2) The monetary value. I request your permission to spend it wherever I like for the benefit of Islam and in the field of services to Islam.”

Subsequently, on 12 February 1980, Maulānā 'Abdullāh 'Abbās Sāhib Nadwī represented Hadrat Maulānā in a special royal assembly arranged by the Saudi government where he received the medal, certificate and award. In the same assembly, Hadrat Maulānā's letter was read and announced:

“From the 200 000 riyals which I received in the award, half is to be given to the Afghan mujāhidūn, one quarter to Jamā'at Tahfīz al-Qur'ān which is under the supervision of Shaykh Sālih al-Qazzāz (former secretary general of the World Muslim League), and the other quarter to Madrasah Saulatiyah in Makkah Mukarramah.”

In this way, Hadrat Maulānā distributed this amount to the above-mentioned three places through the Saudi government.

Shaykh ‘Alī at-Tantāwī

Shaykh ‘Alī at-Tantāwī (Makkah Mukarramah) is a well-known author of this era in the Arab world. He was born in Damascus in 1327 A.H. He studied law at the Syrian University and became an adviser to the high court in Damascus. Because of the turmoil in Syria, he left the country and settled down in the Hijāz. He is an author of several books and resides in Makkah Mukarramah. He has intense love for Hadrat Maulānā and holds him in high regard. A small indication of his sincere acknowledgement of Hadrat Maulānā’s academic and literary greatness can be gauged from the following letter:

To my brother who is beloved to me for Allāh’s sake, the great ustādh, Abul Hasan

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

One day I was speaking over the radio when the broadcaster asked me: Which place do you like the most, and which is the place about which you have the fondest memories?

He thought that I would tell him that it was my hometown, Damascus. However, when I said that it was Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’ in Lucknow, he was left astonished. He asked me in surprise: “Where is Lucknow?” I replied: “It is the city of Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī.” There is no doubt whatsoever that in the Arab world, you

are more well-known than Lucknow. Lucknow is described to the world through you. I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to increase your courage, efforts and the inspiration to do good.

Was salām
'Alī at-Tantāwī

Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah

The erudite Hadīth master, Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah is a professor of Hadīth at Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd University in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). He is originally a resident of Aleppo in Syria. He brings back memories of the scholars of the past as regards his deep knowledge of Hadīth and jurisprudence, and the science of Hadīth narrators and transmissions (which has become weak in the latter generations). He is an excellent example of the character and mannerisms of the genuine 'ulamā', and in his humility and high-mindedness. He is a graduate of Azhar University. (Sadly, he passed away on 18 Shawwāl 1417 A.H./16 February 1997). To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāh made it his daily practice to make du'ā' for four personalities. From among these four one was his teacher, and the other was Hadrat Maulānā.

The Shaykh always had a special bond and affinity with the 'ulamā' of India and its madāris and centres of learning. He used to come to India frequently, and visited Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow on several occasions. He had an intensely loving relationship with Hadrat Maulānā. This can be gauged to a certain extent from his letters. We take

the opportunity of quoting two of the Shaykh's letters.

First Letter

إلى سيد الأجل العلامة الداعية الموهوب المحبوب مولانا الشيخ أبي الحسن علي الحسيني الندوي، أطال الله بقاءه في عافية وسرور ونعمة وحبور امتاعا للإسلام والمسلمين بفضائله وجهائله وازديادا وتزودا من آثاره ومآثره (أمين) من محبه وملتمس دعواته وراجيها عبد الفتاح أبو غدة.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I hope that you, all your beloveds and associates are well. When Yahyā ibn Sa'īd relates Hadīth to us, it seems as though pearls are raining down. By Allāh! Your words are also like that. All thanks are due to Allāh *ta'ālā* who blessed you with this bounty and gave you this power. He selected you for this work and gave you the strength for it. Allāh showed us glittering and great academic pages in our history through your personality and refreshed our memories of the erudite scholars of the past. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* you are an excellent example of those scholars of the past in whose hearts Allāh *ta'ālā* created the love for Allāh *ta'ālā* and His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and made you beloved by virtue of Allāh's love. Your being of such a high stature is not exceptional because a huge and dense shady tree has fresh branches, and is always green and lush. It spreads forth its perfume all the time and everywhere. I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to give you long life and your blessed presence remains for a long time to come.

Kindly remember me in your special times of supplication.

Your beloved, 'Abd al-Fattāh Abu Ghuddah, Riyadh.

Second Letter

إلى سيد الأجل مولانا العلامة الداعية الموهوب المحبوب سماحة الشيخ أبو الحسن علي الندوي حفظه الله تعالى ورعاه وأمتع به العباد والبلاد، وأولاده من محبه عبد الفتاح بن محمد أبو غدة.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I am sending to your respected self a photocopy of the book *al-I'tibār* of Amīr Usāmah ibn Munqidh Shīrāzī in the hope that you will read it and write an introduction to it.

...Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed you with a powerful pen and the treasure of sincerity and devotion. Your words are keys to the hearts of the youth of the Muslim nation, a kindling of their hopes and wishes, and a message of success which the early Muslims possessed...O my most honourable one! Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed you with this treasure by virtue of your pure heart. Due to your enlightened intelligence and practical character, you are the most eligible to expound on those meanings.

Your beloved, 'Abd al-Fattāh Abu Ghuddah, Riyadh.

Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qardāwī

We now quote to you the letter of 'Allāmah Dr. Yūsuf al-Qardāwī (Dean of the College of Islamic Sharī'ah, Qatar University) which he wrote to Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī an-Nadwī *rahimahullāh* in 1980, congratulating him for receiving the King Faisal Award. This letter which is filled with love and affection is quite long. We will suffice with quoting the important parts of it to serve as an example. We

feel we should first present a short introduction about Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qardāwī.

Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qardāwī is a well-known research scholar, preacher and writer of the Arab world. *Fiqh az-Zakāh* is his world-renowned book. He wrote several other popular works. He is an Egyptian and a graduate of Azhar University where he received his doctorate. He is an orator in the Arabic language and contemporary Arab ‘ulamā’ hold him in high regard. He also received the King Faisal Award in recognition of his services to Islam. He is presently the Dean of the College of Islamic Sharī’ah at Qatar University. He is still active in his activities of writing, compiling, propagation and instruction.

Observe the following letter of Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qardāwī and gauge an example of Allāh-bestowed love which an Arab scholar has for an Indian scholar.

The distinguished scholar and great Islamic preacher Sayyid Abul Hasan al-Hasanī an-Nadwī, *may Allāh protect him and give him long life in the service of Islam.*

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

On behalf of myself and the scholars and lecturers at the College of Sharī’ah at Qatar University, we convey our sincere congratulations to you on receiving the King Faisal Award for services to Islam. I believe that when personalities like you receive such an award, then it is actually the status of the award which increases. I

am saying this without any flattery and adulation. I know you for the last 30 years as a man who has devoted his life for the service of Islam and who invites towards Islam with absolute wisdom. You always make positive and constructive contributions in every field...

I and every person who knows you have perceived the various virtues and excellent qualities which Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed you with. These have always been the qualities of the inheritors of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*, the representatives of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and those working for the revival of Islam. These virtues and attributes are clearly visible in your sound views, impressionable speech, effective da'wat and correct actions. And they demonstrate your sincerity and honesty. Your balanced attitude is well-known in Islamic circles and everyone speaks about your sense of balance. It is these very same attributes and qualities which have caused your words to be so effective, and made the educated class to be thirsty for your books. Your personality enjoys wide acceptance and recognition among the various Muslim groups and creeds. In fact, even the one who differs with your views or does not agree with your way of thinking is compelled into appreciating and valuing you. He is forced to speak highly of you and acknowledge your open-heartedness

and excellent qualities. This is a very great bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* which you enjoy. We have undoubtedly found the highest example in the Muslim world in our senior, Maulānā Abul Hasan.

You have the quality of preaching in a revivalist manner, you possess the softness of genuinely Allāh-fearing 'ulamā', the creed of tauhīd like the scholars of the past, strict adherence to the Sunnah, facts and figures like modern educated people; one who has taken full advantage from the pure spring of the Qur'ān and Sunnah as regards knowledge, understanding, temperament and practical application; an expert in the Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages, one who is fully quenched with the treasure of Islamic sciences...

O most august Maulānā! Long before we met you, we came to know you through your book *Mādhā Khasara al-'Ālam bi Inḥitāt al-Muslimīn*. I then had the honour of meeting you in 1951 in Egypt. At the time, I was a student of Azhar University in the College of the Principles of Religion. I saw in you an example of that practising 'ālim and devoted teacher who is eligible for a high rank and status in Allāh's sight.

As per the statement of Hadrat 'Īsā 'alayhis salām: I love you and Allāh is sufficient for you. I cannot praise anyone against Allāh's wishes.

I constantly remember that small and narrow alley which emerges from Hayy al-Azhar onto Mūsikī Street, and that simple and ordinary room in which you and your companions lived. I recall the absolute simplicity and absence of every type of formality which pervaded that room. This, notwithstanding the fact that many people offered you grand hotels, or at least more comfortable hotel rooms. You refused and preferred living like a poor student.

I will never forget your fruitful meetings with the youth involved in Islamic propagation, your living with them as though you were one from among them, giving them your thoughts and heart, conveying knowledge which enlightened the minds, and faith which illuminated the hearts. They were deriving beneficial knowledge from you, good deeds, and an enlightened spirit. They were seeing in you the true attributes of a Muslim, the honesty of a believer, the patience of a mujāhid, the strength of an ascetic, the honour of knowledge, and the spirit of a propagator who made his prayers, sacrifices, living and dying solely for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.

Your brother who is in need of Allāh's mercy

Yūsuf al-Qardāwī

01/04/1400 A.H.

Subsequently, Hadrat Maulānā went to Doha, Qatar under the special invitation of the Ministry of Auqāf where he delivered a lecture titled *Qīmah al-Ummah al-Islāmīyyah Bayna al-Umam wa Dauruhā fī al-‘Ālam* – the value of the Muslim nation and its role in the world. This lecture was transcribed and published under the same title by the Ministry of Auqāf of Qatar. Immediately after Hadrat Maulānā’s lecture, Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qardāwī stood up and spoke about Hadrat Maulānā’s personality. It was not just a speech, rather it was a pure drink which poured forth from his heart which – although it contained his feelings, emotions, perceptions and intense love – was an excellent example of an academic, scholarly and balanced address. Those who were present there informed me that Shaykh al-Qardāwī was not pre-arranged to deliver a speech. Nonetheless, when Hadrat Maulānā completed his lecture, the Shaykh suddenly got up from his place, sat down next to Hadrat Maulānā, and commenced his speech. Each person felt as if the Shaykh did not get up of his own accord. Rather, it was the magnetic pull of this great personality which drew him. He was not speaking of his own accord, rather it was Allāh *ta’ālā* who made him say what he said. The audience was left in a trance-like feeling because they never heard Shaykh al-Qardāwī speaking in such glowing terms about any other person.

The pure emotions which Shaykh al-Qardāwī expressed 15 years ago (in 1980) in a letter were now flowing from his tongue in the form of a speech. Since the limits of the Sharī’ah had kept him within the confines of moderation, instead of the emotions which he expressed being an uncontrolled deluge, they were like a natural gentle rain which was

irrigating the heart and soul. Anyway, how the Shaykh expressed his love and devotion, and with what words he unveiled the facts can be gauged from a few extracts of his speech:

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Shaykh Abul Ḥasan is an Islamic personality who is immersed in the colour of Islam because Islam has penetrated his veins. His beginning and end is Islam. All his running and moving are for Islam. All his efforts are solely for Islam, and he is holding on firmly to it. He acquires the nourishment for his heart and mind solely from Islam, and is engrossed in propagating it. His love and displeasure are for Islam alone. He is occupied in writing, teaching and lecturing solely for Islam; and travels exclusively for this purpose. He meets and parts ways only for Islam. Islam is the sole occupation of his day and resting at night. Islam alone is his provision for his journey and his companion at home. In short, his existence is from Islam and for the sake of Islam alone.

Shaykh Abul Ḥasan is a Muḥammadī (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in the true sense of the word because he adopted the way of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* for his standing up, sitting down, moving about, and for his entire life. He has made Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi*

wa sallam alone his model. He made the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* his guiding light for abstinence, piety, Allāh's fear, worship, detachment from worldly adornment, and everything else. He is a reminder to us of the righteous people of the past. He totally disregards all the things which we worry about, viz. wealth, riches, adornment, beautification and so forth. When I see him, I am reminded of the lives of Hadrat Salmān Fārsī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and others.

Shaykh Abul Hasan is undoubtedly an international figure, and every person who is aware of the Shaykh's activities knows and acknowledges this. Although the Shaykh is an Indian by birth, upbringing and education, his concern and field of action is the entire world (for the sake of propagation, instruction and elevating the word of Allāh *ta'ālā*). The Shaykh's efforts and his practical activities are spread throughout the world. This is why the Shaykh's name is well-known and popular in the Arab world as it is in India. It is for this reason he is included as a founder and founding member of many international organizations. On one hand, he is a founding member of the Muslim World League, and on the other side, he is the chairman of the Muslim Literary League. Furthermore, the Oxford Centre for

Islamic Research is a product of his efforts. He is a member of the Supreme Assembly for Masājid and the Fiqh Academy (of Saudi Arabia). In addition to this, he is a member of the highest organizations of Jordan, Syria, England and other countries...

Shaykh Abul Hasan is my beloved. I testify that I love him – and I hope that it is solely for the sake of Allāh *ta'ālā*. I love him for his abstinence, sincerity and devotion. I love him for his balance and moderation. I love him for the fact that his thinking is pure from all falsehood, his heart is pure from jealousy, his beliefs are free from all forms of polytheism, his worship is free from all forms of innovation, and his tongue is pure from accusations, injuries [inflicted on others] and insinuations.

I love him for his engrossment with weighty issues instead of bothering about minor matters, with realities as opposed to appearances, with meanings as opposed to results, and with depths as opposed to surfaces. I love him for his noble character, praiseworthy attributes and his soft nature. I am hopeful of Allāh's proximity by virtue of my love for him. I pray that I am blessed with being resurrected with him.

مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ
وَالصَّالِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

*They are with those whom Allāh favoured: they are the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. How excellent is their company!*¹

There is nothing surprising in people differing about certain ‘ulamā’, but they are all unanimous about Abul Ḥasan. So much so, those who are not from his way of thinking and not on his way have no alternative but to invite him to their gatherings. All this is because of the merits and special qualities which Allāh ta’ālā blessed him with. Very few ‘ulamā’ enjoy these distinguishing qualities.

Shaykh Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd

The following is an academic testimony and acknowledgement from the Shaykh of Azhar University, Shaykh Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd:

Shaykh Abul Ḥasan an-Nadwī...You devoted your life for Allāh ta’ālā, and spent your night and day as a devoted and Allāh-fearing Muslim. You spread the voice of Islam to all corners of the world through your pure character and excellent Islamic literature. You propagated Islam through your lengthy and distant journeys. You addressed the people, guided them and steered them. May Allāh ta’ālā reward you with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

Shaykh Muḥammad Maḥmūd as-Ṣawwāf

Shaykh Muḥammad Maḥmūd as-Ṣawwāf (Iraq) is a mujāhid, author, scholar and orator. He is a

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4: 69.

graduate of Azhar University. He was active in the Palestinian jihād under the Ikhwān al-Muslimīn movement. He then settled down in Saudi Arabia where he gained the confidence of King Fayṣal *rahimahullāh*, was appointed as an advisor to the Ministry of Education, and as a member of the Muslim World League in Makkah Mukarramah.

His deep emotions for the Arab world, and his love and respect for Hadrat Maulānā can be gauged from the following letter.

سيدي سماحة الأخ السجل العلامة المجاهد السيد أبو الحسن علي
الحسني الندوي المحترم!

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rahhmatullāhi wa
barakātuh

وتحية من عند الله مباركة طيبة، أبعثها إلى أنفسكم الكبيرة
الطيبة مصحوبة بالشوق والإجلال والتقدير والإحترام.

I was honoured by your valuable gift and am grateful for your affection. I spontaneously prayed for your good health, safety and long life so that people may continue eating from that spiritual food which you offered to the Arabs. If only Egypt were to listen to you, and the Arab world regarding which you have such noble thoughts were to pay heed to you. If only it understood and preserved whatever you said to it...unfortunately, the leaders and rulers of the Arab world have wasted it away and placed it on the wrong path. At present, we are counting every moment and anxiously awaiting

your arrival in Iraq so that you may quench it with the spiritual rain which Allāh *ta'ālā* has bestowed to you.

We earnestly request you to inform us of your intended arrival at the land of the Tigris and Euphrates so that we may be present to welcome you and have the honour of meeting you. My heart is most restless and desirous of this.

Was salām

Muḥammad Maḥmūd as-Sawwāf

12 Sha'bān 1370 A.H./17 May 1951¹

Note: These letters of the senior and well-known scholars of the time are most certainly testimonies to Hadrat Maulānā's greatness and close bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise on these guidelines which will be a source of reward for Hadrat Maulānā. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

¹ *Ta'mīr-e-Ḥayāt*, 25 May 1990.

QUOTATIONS FROM: EUROPE, AMERICA AND ISRAEL – AN EXPOSITION

“The Higher Institute for Islamic Propagation and Thought” falls under the Department of Propagation and Training of Dār al-‘Ulūm Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’. On the occasion of the beginning of the academic year, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* spoke on the topic: *Europe, America and Israel – an exposition of their reality.*

He encouraged the students, ‘ulamā’ and all conscientious Muslims to their refutation. It is a most enlightening speech which is quoted below. (compiler)

An Important Warning

The biggest challenge and danger at present is that the West and the Christian world, and with it the Jewish element (which is in cahoots with the Western countries) are trying to put an end to Islamic sentiment in the Muslim countries. The pride of allegiance to Islam must end. The fountainhead of religion (i.e. īmān) must cease to exist, and this must be replaced by an inferiority complex.

In the seminar which was hosted by our Dār al-Muṣannifin on “Orientalism and Orientalists”, we had said that the Western powers have correctly realized that mere military superiority, political

organization and control, and modern weaponry and warfare are not sufficient. In order to enslave a country permanently, the educated and intellectual class of that country will have to be intellectually intimidated by the imperialist power. To this end, they prepared the Orientalists. Very few people have realized this secret that the Orientalists do not undertake academic research and write books solely out of their academic interest which is very limited. Rather, Orientalism is prompted by political and imperialist objectives. This is a major danger of our time. There is a need to understand the source of this danger, its weaponry, and those who are wielding these weapons.

The Orientalists had an entire army in Europe and America which enjoyed every type of support and backup. They spent all their intelligence in writing books which openly attacked Islam. They were intelligent enough to realize that if they attacked Islam, an opposing force will come into existence. Therefore, (through their cunningness) they decided to include in their books such statements about the Qur'ān, Hadīth and Islamic jurisprudence which would cause the reader to develop an inferiority complex. The one who reads these books will think to himself that we [Muslims] are living an extremely inferior life. And that our 'ulamā', mentors and authors did not

mention these weaknesses. Hadīth was compiled much later. Islamic law was codified much later. These are the things which they mention in their books. Whereas we know that there was much wisdom in this. When Hadīth compilation commenced, we clearly gauge that divine help and support was with it. In fact, it was a miracle. It was a divine miracle that people from Bukhārā and Turkistan who were so intelligent with extremely strong memories took on this task. An example of this cannot be found in history. Just one incident is related to testify to this. The following is related in the biography of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*:

When Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* came to Baghdad, the ‘ulamā’ of the city decided to test him by taking 100 Aḥādīth and interpolating the chains of transmission and the actual text of the Aḥādīth. Ten different Aḥādīth were given to ten persons, and each one will question Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* on the ten. When he arrived in the assembly, each of the ten persons quoted the ten Aḥādīth which were allocated to him. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* was asked to give his opinion on each one. To each of the Aḥādīth which were read to him, he said: “I do not know this Hadīth.” The scholars who were present realized and understood what he meant, while the ignorant ones smiled at his lack of knowledge. When all ten completed reading their allocated

Aḥādīth, Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* turned to each of them one after the other, and said: “This is the text and this is the chain (sanad) of the ten Aḥādīth which you read before me.” In this way, he corrected each Ḥadīth, matched each text to its correct chain of transmission, and read it to them. Those who were present were left stupefied at his insight, alertness and strong memory.

In the same way, when jurisprudence was being collated and codified, Allāh *ta’ālā* caused the four Imāms and their deputies, students and mujtahidīn to come to the fore. Allāh *ta’ālā* inspired them in this field in a manner which is unparalleled in the world of promulgation of laws and solutions to day to day issues.

Similarly, when Greek philosophy challenged the Islamic state – especially Iraq and the capital, Baghdad – and began influencing the educated class, won them over through their “academic superiority”, and created doubts in the minds of ordinary people; then Allāh *ta’ālā* created the likes of Imām Abul Ḥasan Ash’arī, Imām Abū Mansūr Mātirīdī, Imām Ghazzālī and Shaykh al-Islam Ḥāfiz Ibn Taymiyyah. They all played a major role in wiping out the influences of the Greek philosophers and removing their intimidating presence.

In like manner, incorrect beliefs, pagan customs and practices, polytheism and

innovations were confronted by reformers, revivers, and sincere preachers and propagators in every era. They invited towards correct beliefs, the revival of the Sunnah and Shari'ah, and their proliferation. They removed the danger of distortion in religion and caused the true religion to become common as though it was the currency of the time.

One proof of the benefit which Western colonialism derived from the Orientalists and their "research works" is that ever since Western colonialism lost its influence in the Eastern countries or became weak in some places, the work of the Orientalists also waned and weakened. This is not coincidental. Neither has journalism retrogressed nor the influence of the radio. All the different means of conveying information have not retrogressed in any way; rather, they have increased. Despite this, we see that the work of the Orientalists has become completely inconsequential. A book may be written occasionally, but it does not have that power and evidence which books of the past had. The sole objective of the Orientalists was to weaken the confidence of the educated and religious classes of the Muslim world, and to create doubts in them about their religion, the history of their religion, the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the Qur'ān, jurisprudence and scholastic theology.

The most serious danger at the moment is that our modern educated youth are developing an inferiority complex. The books which they are reading in French, English and other languages are having an effect on them. We do not see this so much here [in India], but in other countries of the world, especially those which were previously colonized by France (the area of northern and western Africa were under French rule. Morocco and Algeria were also colonized by France. Even Libya and Tripoli were under the French).

The most concerning and worrying point is that the Arab countries are presently in the sights of America and Israel, and their attack on these countries is, to a large extent, very successful. Their highest educated class (who generally ascend the positions of government and rule) is suffering from an inferiority complex. It is becoming pessimistic about Islam's future. Algeria and Egypt are in the forefront in this regard. The rulers and governments of these countries are extremely fearful of Islamic movements. Their fundamental conflict is with the movement which is calling for a revival of Islam. Battle lines have been drawn between them and Islamists. Whereas Algeria, Tripoli, Egypt, etc. are places where the movement for independence was led by the 'ulamā'. Yet, these countries are today fearing the Islamic

leaders and Islamic movements the most. Shaykh Hasan al-Bannā was considered a threat in Egypt and he was martyred. When ‘Abd an-Nāṣir ascended the throne, Sayyid Qutb was martyred. Thousands of others were martyred. The governments of Egypt and Algeria are specifically fearful of the Islamic movement. Anyone who says “this is against the Islamic Shari‘ah” is considered to be the worst threat. They do not consider Israel to be a threat nor any other non-Muslim country. If they feel anyone to be a threat and danger, it is the Islamic element. This is a very serious tragedy. This tragedy is experienced in a land where Azhar University is situated – where students in the thousands study. A university which is considered to be the largest Islamic and academic institution and university of the Muslim world.

The challenge of our times and a terrifying reality is that our Arab countries are fearful of the Islamic call and message. They have no powerful Islamic force and movement. They are deprived of movements and personalities who can draw them towards Islam.

It is the Arab countries from which we received imān, the wealth of the Qur‘ān, the reality of humanity, and guidance. This favour of theirs extends to the entire world. We are not indebted to the greatest of rulers and nations, and the largest of cultures and civilizations as we are to the

Arabs. It is because of them that we are believers, and it is because of them that we are conscientious and dutiful humans. The call of Islamic da'wah has not only decreased among the Arabs, rather it is lost. After the movement of the Ikhwān al-Muslimīn, it seems as though a deafening silence has enveloped them. Because of the acts of oppression and torture which were committed there, the worthy inhabitants left the country. Consequently, in Egypt itself such a period was experienced that it did not even cross their minds that Muslims could have an influential role in the world.

My book *Mādhā Khasara al-'Ālam bi Inḥitāt al-Muslimīn* was published from Cairo (a weak introduction was written by Dr. Aḥmad Amīn, then a powerful introduction was written by Sayyid Quṭb, and Dr. Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā also wrote an introduction to it). When I went to Egypt, one of the newspapers there posed this question: "Can the Muslims even influence the world? Can the rise and fall of Muslims effect the rest of the world? What kind of title have you given to your book?" They pointed a finger at me and expressed their astonishment. I took solace from the couplet of Iqbāl which was a reply to them and which he quoted on behalf of Iblīs. Iqbāl said:

“At every breath I fear the awakening of that nation the reality of whose religion is to police the universe.”

The Muslims are not in such a position. Where do they have the numbers through which they could influence the world? At present this is the most chronic ailment of the Arab countries. It is a great danger that they are losing hope in the future of Islam. They cannot understand and realize that in Islam alone lies the salvation of the world – religiously, morally, materially, socially and politically. This is a task which – as regards its value, worth and importance – is the most important and most significant.

You will have to develop within you the ability to persuade the Arabs. For this, it is necessary for your speech and writing to have that effect, attraction and eloquence which would prompt them to say that this is an excellent piece of writing. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications of Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’ publishes such literature which goes to the Arab countries which they read with keen interest and read it to others. I noticed on one occasion when we were seated in the house of Maulwī ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbās Nadwī Sāhib in Makkah Mukarramah. Ustādh ‘Abd al-Hakīm ‘Ābidīn began reading an article. I had to go to relieve myself, so I said I am coming

back just now. When I returned, I saw him reading and crying. This man was the brother-in-law of Imām Ḥasan al-Bannā, a great orator and highly educated individual. When I entered, he asked me: “Who wrote this book?” I replied: “My nephew, Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī.” He said: “You must convey my salām to him.” The book which he was reading was *al-Islam Bayna Lā wa Na’am* (Islam between yes and no).

It will be considered to be a great achievement in this world and in the Hereafter if you develop within you the ability to convey the call of Islam to the Arabs. Allāh *ta’ālā* has provided you with the means to do this. Set yourself a target and goal that you will develop that level of capability and qualification through which you can invite the Arabs to remain more firm on Islam. From among my books, *Ilal Islam Min Jadīd, Ajāhiliyyah Ba’da al-Islam Ayyuha al-‘Arab, Ilā ar-Rāyah al-Muḥammadiyyah Ayyuha al-‘Arab* are the books which can awaken and shake up the Arabs. They say: A non-Arab, an Indian is addressing us. He has so much of confidence and self-belief in Islam which we no longer have.

If Allāh *ta’ālā* enables them to derive benefit from this, there can be no greater way of gaining proximity to Allāh *ta’ālā*. In the sense that through you, people of this Muslim nation are developing confidence and trust in Islam, and

through whom this bounty and treasure spread throughout the world. The graduates of our madāris ought to have a greater zeal for this than others that the language [Arabic] through whom we are understanding this religion, through whom we received this treasure of knowledge and still receiving it – it is their right that we take it back to them, that they develop a feeling and emotion for it, and a sense of self-respect for it. They are the teachers and we are the students, they are the mentors and we are the disciples, they are our guides and we are guided by them.

It is for this purpose that the Institute for Islamic Propagation is established. It is to be congratulated and applauded. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward our friends and associates.

In this era, in this country and in this environment – you must make it a point to make the educated class specifically and the masses in general believe that no matter how much times change, Islam is eternal, and that it is the true, complete and living religion even today. That Islam alone can steer this world, it is through Islam alone that we can be successful in these modern times, and it is through Islam alone that we can be eligible for Allāh's help and support.

This is a task which you will have to do everywhere – locally, and specifically

among the educated people who were previously influenced and targeted by English culture, and are now being influenced and targeted by Hindu culture. They are in danger of being impressed by the Hindu idolatrous culture and ways. You will have to bear this in mind as well. When studying the Arabic language, don't ever think to yourself that you will go to one of the Arab countries and get a job there. If not, I will become a mu'adhdhin there or an imām. This is of no value. It was never the objective and aim of the founders of Nadwatul 'Ulamā' - Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Maungerī *Sāhib rahimahullāh*, Maulānā Sayyid Zuhūr al-Islam Fatahpūrī *rahimahullāh*, Maulānā *Hakīm* Sayyid 'Abd al-Hayy *rahimahullāh*. Nor was it the aim and objective of those who gave progress to Nadwatul 'Ulamā' - 'Allāmah Shiblī *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* and their Allāh-fearing and Allāh-conscious associates and supporters.

In order to give thanks and express gratitude to their efforts and sacrifices, you will have to become true inviters of Islam, you will have to remove the inferiority complex which Muslims suffer from against other opposing cultures by reading the books of Western scholars. And on the other side, you will have to persuade the Arabs into believing that

their true and genuine asset [Islam] has been returned to them.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire you all.

Salutations of Allāh *ta'ālā* to the best of His creation, our master, Muḥammad s*allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to his family and companions.

QUOTATIONS FROM: THE FOUR PILLARS OF ISLAM

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* delves into the realities and wisdoms behind the four pillars and obligations of Islam which are listed in the famous Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*:

بني الإسلام على خمس شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمدا عبده ورسوله، وإقام الصلاة وإيتاء الزكاة والحج وصوم رمضان.

Islam is based on five pillars: (1) Testifying that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger, (2) establishing ṣalāh, (3) paying zakāh, (4) performing ḥajj, (5) fasting in Ramaḍān.

This is certainly Hadrat Maulānā’s matchless and most momentous book which he wrote after intense research and investigation, and after drowning himself into deep internal spirituality. He quotes such extracts from the books of the seniors which – Allāh willing – will surely be a source of increase in īmān.

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbās Sāhib Nadwī comments on this book in his *Mīr Kā Rawā* (which is a biography of Hadrat Maulānā) as follows:

The author of *Arkān-e-Arba’ah* proves that these acts of worship are the needs of human nature and the adornments of humanity. Man’s peculiar make up and his temperament demand that without these [acts of worship] man’s existence is reduced to a corpse, human qualities

vanish from inside him, and that the human soul without acts of worship is left like a fish out of water. Islamic worship is a food to the soul and a tonic for the temperament of the Shari'ah. The acts of worship of other religions are means of salvation from unknown fears and for the acquisition of worldly benefits.

He writes towards the end:

Those who are accustomed to the style of explanation and discussion of Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* – especially the style of Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah – will perceive that this book is a blessed addendum to Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah, and that the author dived into its ocean and collected its pearls of wisdom in one place.¹

Introduction

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* and peace be to His chosen servants.

This book deals with the wisdoms behind the four fundamental pillars of Islam, viz. ṣalāh, zakāh, fasting and hajj. It contains their correct status in the Shari'ah, legal aspect, religious system, and their position in one's personal and collective life. Furthermore, those of their objectives and mysteries have been explained which are proven from the Qur'ān and Hadith. And which the Muslims of the early centuries of Islam, notable and distinguished

¹ *Mīr Kā Rawā*, p. 518.

‘ulamā’ of Islamic history, and those deeply embedded in knowledge took from the original fountainhead of Islam without the influences of non-Arab formalities, notions, philosophical prattling, personal ravings and exaggerations.

They were neither influenced by foreign ideas and notions nor by the new inclinations of their time. Neither did they measure the realities of these pillars, their objectives, their mysteries, their principles and their methods with the yardsticks of the political, philosophical, economic and social systems of their respective times.

The author re-studied the Qur’ān for the sake of writing this book and re-assessed the authentic and reliable Hadīth collections. The author then cast a glance at whatever has been written about these pillars, the explanations which have been given, and whatever has been said about their objectives and mysteries. He got the most help from the writings and investigations of those Imāms of Islam to whom Allāh *ta’ālā* gave a large share of a true and genuine understanding of Islam. Who, after being protected against excesses and shortcomings, formalities and exaggerations, reached their depths. And who, in explaining the objectives of the Sharī’ah, secrets and mysteries of the Qur’ān and injunctions followed that course which is required by the Sharī’ah, which was the hallmark of the earliest Muslims who were the direct addressees of these injunctions, and in whose language the Qur’ān was revealed.

These people combined deep insight in Dīn, correct understanding, deep knowledge, complete practice, total emulation of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, and continued striving in the field of

knowledge and practice. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* opened all the paths of guidance to them, and made the difficult things easy for them. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

*Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths. Surely Allāh is with the righteous.*¹

On one hand, the true spirit of those acts of worship had permeated their entire existence, and they were completely dyed by their colour. On the other side, they delved into the heart and soul of those sciences, and enjoyed the level of perfection in them. Without this, it was impossible to fathom those mysteries and wisdoms. They practised on them with sincerity and devotion, and understood their spirit and reality with the highest level of insight, deep intelligence and intricate gaze. Consequently, they could explain the themes, meanings, mysteries, realities and implications of those acts of worship without any hesitation.

In this regard, the author benefited the most from *Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, the magnum opus of *Hakīm al-Islam* *Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Dehlawī rahimahullāh*, which is a matchless and unique book on this topic. The crux and core of whatever *Shāh Sāhib rahimahullāh* wrote about the four pillars is now in this book.

This book is the essence of a long period of study, and the result of continuous pondering and reflecting. The least it does is that it opens a new door of thinking, pondering and reflecting over this

¹ Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt, 29: 69.

most important topic. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* through whose greatness all good deeds are completed and accomplished.

Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī
Dā'irah Shāh 'Alamullāh
Rāi Bareilly

Salāh

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

A bond between Allāh and the servant

The reality, importance and need for salāh can only be understood by that person; and true enjoyment from it can only be experienced by that person who is fully aware of that unique, matchless, lofty, fine, and incomparable bond which exists between Allāh and the servant. This is a bond whose parallel cannot be found anywhere else. It cannot be even compared to the mutual bond which exists between any two in this universe, or between the creator and the created, the ruler and the ruled, the strong and the weak, the beggar and the giver. This is because this bond is finer, loftier, deeper, firmer, more comprehensive and more all embracing than all these other relationships.

Relationships are subservient to attributes

In order to understand the bond between Allāh and the servant, it is necessary to know the qualities and attributes of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is because relationships are always subservient to attributes. It is through attributes that they are manifested. If we do not know the qualities of two personalities, and we do not know the good relationship which exists between the two, we will never be able to understand

the true nature of their relationship. All the relationships which we uphold in this world, through which laws are promulgated, and which bring about the existence of a certain culture or society – are in reality, subservient to these qualities which we see in human society.

The reason for the importance of attributes and names

This is why all divinely revealed books, all religions, and all Shari'ahs have given the most importance to attributes. After that, they provide details about relationships, acts of worship and obedience, obligations and social dealings. All divine religions first concentrate on correction of beliefs, and then on actions, worship, rules and regulations. Every Prophet in his respective time first taught correct knowledge, correct recognition, the correct attributes of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and His sanctity and purity. And this was the most central point of their propagation, invitation, efforts and striving. The Qur'ān which oversees and preserves all these scriptures, and is Allāh's last and eternal Book is sufficient proof for this. This theme is mentioned again and again, and explained in various ways. In fact, it is the fundamental theme of this miraculous Book. Consequently, we see that a short sūrah like Sūrah al-Ikhlās (which contains the most comprehensive words on the Oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā* and His purity in a few verses) is said to equal one third of the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān speaks about Allāh's noble attributes, His beautiful names, His actions and doings, His power and authority, His manufacturing and creating, His kindness and mercy, His love and affection, His generosity and munificence, His

pardoning and overlooking, His giving and withholding, His benefit and harm, His knowledge and cognition, His closeness and proximity, His all-encompassing power and His acceptance and conferring. These are explained in such a manner that the most comprehensive example of His beauty and might, excellence and conferring, beauty and bounty are presented to the servant.

وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

His attribute is the most exalted in the heavens and the earth. And He alone is mighty, wise.¹

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

There is nothing similar to Him. He alone is all-hearing, all-seeing.²

Man is a conglomeration of opposites

In these heavenly scriptures we also find such texts and references (which are affirmed by experience and knowledge) in which the temperament and psychology of this strange and unique creation is explained. The opposing and conflicting qualities and attributes which are found within man have been exposed. There is no other creation that is more unique and stranger than man, and which is a conglomeration of opposites as much as man. While he may be weak on one hand, he is also a glittering star of strength and power. He may be needy, but he loves wealth and riches. He is here for a temporary

¹ Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 27.

² Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 11.

period, yet he desires eternal life. He experiences illnesses and dangers, yet he seeks sound health and goodness. He lacks courage but still has high aspirations. His needs are countless but his hopes are unlimited. His feelings are more fragile than bubbles, and his emotions change at every moment. His thirst is neither quenched nor does anything satiate him. His heart gets fed up with everything old, and it is desirous of everything new. He turns away from what is available to him, and hankers after what is not. His desires are more than the number of his breaths. The list of his needs is longer than his life. This limited world is not enough for the fulfilment of his wishes.

Nonetheless, within this strange and unique contradiction, his high aspirations, courage, constant changing and restlessness lies the secret of man's honour, greatness, and bestowal of divine vicegerency. It was this very same nature which induced him to bear the weighty trust which the heavens, earth and mountains declined to shoulder.

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَيُّنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا
وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا.

*We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it. Man undertook to bear it; he is very merciless, immature.*¹

¹ Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 72.

Natural love and affinity

Since his very inception, man was created with love. He was given the five senses with which he derives benefit from his material life. He has been given one additional sense which we can refer to as the sense of love, affection or affinity. This sense can be powerful and weak, it can be clearly visible and it can also be concealed. However, its absence can only be an indication that man has either lost his capability, or diverted from his natural make-up and admitted himself among the inanimate creations. Man is loyal and also sensitive. His feelings are conflicting and his emotions are delicate. He is drawn towards beauty and perfection in a manner which no other creation in the world is attracted. He is prepared to sacrifice his life, love, devotion, feelings and everything else for his beloved and for the object of his quest. The true stories of lovers are reflections of this human nature. The entire history of those who truly recognized Allāh *ta'ālā* is a display of this feeling. All the love and romantic literature of the world, and the entire treasure of *ghazal* (whose literature no country is deprived of) are indebted to this natural temperament.

The correct form of the bond between Allāh and man

First of all we will have to refresh in our minds all those attributes of Allāh *ta'ālā* which we express as His power, knowledge, mercy and affection, generosity and munificence, acceptance of supplications, closeness and proximity; then those lofty attributes and beautiful names which the Qur'an mentions and explains in a most eloquent and miraculous way. After that, we must think about those of man's qualities which we can sum up as

weakness, inability, need and poverty. We should also cast a glance at his lofty and high aspirations which have not been placed in any other creation. Look at his never ending hunger and unquenchable thirst in the two departments of materialism and spiritualism, in which he has left behind the animals as well. Look at his never ending list of needs, desires, requests and hopes for which there is no equal as regards its abundance, variety, delicacy of perception and quickness of apprehension; and then look at his love, devotion, submission and loyalty which are deeply embedded in every fibre of his body.

In the light of the above glaring facts, does it not follow that man needs to remain in continuous obedience and worship, rukū' and sajdah, and supplication and prayer before his Creator who is the most generous and the master of all, and who fulfils every need of man whether expressed verbally or otherwise?

وَأَنْتُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ط وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

*He gave you all of that which you asked Him. Were you to count the favours of Allāh, you will not be able to encompass them.*¹

The One who is aware of such delicate and hidden feelings, forgotten thoughts, old and disregarded hopes and wishes which man himself either disregarded and gave up after losing hope; and also such delicate thoughts regarding which the mind and heart sometimes do not coincide in.

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 34.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ

Know that Allāh intervenes between man and his heart.¹

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ

He knows the treachery of the eyes and whatever the chests conceal.²

وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى

If you speak out aloud, He certainly knows all that is secret and that which is even more concealed.³

Allāh is the One who is the closest from every close one, the One who hears the most, and responds the most.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ط أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ لَا فَلَيسْتَ جِئُونَا لِي وَلِيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ.

When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am near. I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me. They should therefore obey My command and have conviction in Me so that they may come onto the virtuous path.⁴

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسُّسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ، وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ.

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 24.

² Sūrah al-Mu'min, 40: 19.

³ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 7.

⁴ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 186.

*We certainly created man and We know all that transpires in his self. We are closer to him than the jugular vein.*¹

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

*We are nearer to him than you but you do not see.*²

Allāh *ta'ālā* loves the one who begs Him, cries before Him, holds on to Him, cuts himself off from every place and remains fallen at His court. Allāh loves such a person more than the one who acts independent and self-sufficient.

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ، إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ.

*Your Sustainer says: Call to Me so that I may respond to your call. Surely those who are too proud to worship Me shall enter Hell, disgraced.*³

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ط إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

*Call on your Sustainer humbly and secretly. He does not like those who transgress the bounds.*⁴

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إنه من لم يسأل الله يغضب عليه

¹ Sūrah Qāf, 50: 16.

² Sūrah al-Wāqī'ah, 56: 85.

³ Sūrah al-Mu'min, 40: 60.

⁴ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 55.

Allāh is displeased with the one who does not ask Him.

The entire universe is immersed in worship

The sun is the source of light, life and warmth ever since the universe came into existence. It is carrying out its duty without any failing and complaint. The moon is determining the months and years through its movement. Mountains are stationed at their respective points for thousands of years. The trees are standing in their respective places and are engrossed in Allāh's worship. They are providing man with shade and fruit. The wind brings with it the message of life from one place to another for man (who is the chief of this universe and Allāh's vicegerent on earth). Clouds bear water which they then convey from one place to another, and give new life to the land. This results in springs gushing forth, man's thirst is quenched, the seasons change, and the land sprouts its treasures. Cattle move and run about on their legs, and they seem to be in the bowing posture. They convey man from one place to another, and they carry his weight. Through them, people are able to make garments which protect them from the cold, and make arrangements for their food and drink. Many animals move on their bellies. From them too man derives many benefits. All these animals neither possess a heart [human feelings] nor an intellect. They are occupied in Allāh's obedience and worship all the time. There is no question of disobedience, rebellion, transgression, nor exhaustion. They don't go on strikes and never take a holiday. As though they are in prostration all the time and in every condition.

The author then quotes Qur'ānic verses which are in line with the above theme. These ought to be studied. He then writes:

All these creatures – despite differences in their shapes and the various ways in which they worship – they are engaged in such a *ṣalāh* and in such praise and glorification which coincides with their function and disposition. None can understand them except the one whose insight Allāh *ta'ālā* has opened and before whom this material veil has been lifted.

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ط وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ط إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا.

*The seven heavens, the earth and whoever is in them glorify Him. There is not a single thing which does not proclaim His praises. However, you do not understand their proclamation. Surely He is forbearing, forgiving.*¹

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرِ ضُفَّتِ ط كُلُّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحَهُ ط وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ.

*Do you not see that it is Allāh's remembrance that all [creatures] which are in the heavens and the earth make, and even the birds with wings outspread. Each [one] knows its form of worship (ṣalāh) and remembrance. Allāh knows whatever they do.*²

¹ Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 44.

² Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 41.

Man's status in this universe

Based on the previously-mentioned peculiarities of man, his superiority and nobility, his intellect and heart, man ought to have remained continuously in the worship of Allāh *ta'ālā* – far more than the other creations. Every moment ought to have been spent in bowing, prostrating, praising and glorifying Allāh *ta'ālā*, and remembering Him. Never should his tongue be neglectful of His remembrance. The divine gifts which are showered specifically to man, the bounties which he has been made eligible for, and the countless favours which rain down upon him all demand that he does not abandon worship for even a single moment, he is not negligent of *ṣalāh* for even the blink of an eye, and that he should become like those angels regarding whom the Qur'ān states:

وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ.
يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ.

*To Him alone belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. Those who are close to Him are not rebellious to His worship and are not weary [thereof]. They remember [Him] night and day – they do not tire.*¹

However, bearing in mind that Allāh *ta'ālā* made him His vicegerent on earth and placed him on a very delicate position, he has been endowed with desires, and he also has certain needs. He has feelings, the heat of love, the perception of pain, the experiencing of happiness, and the desire and yearning to strive and acquire knowledge. He has the ability to benefit

¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 19-20.

from the buried treasures of the earth for the fulfilment of his objectives. The distinction of teaching him the names of things which man enjoys is actually a manifestation of the secret behind his natural disposition and his appointment as the vicegerent of Allāh *ta'ālā* on earth.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ جَاعِلٌ فِی الْاَرْضِ خَلِیْفَةً ط قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا
وَسَیُفْسِدُ الدِّیْمَآءَ ح وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ط قَالَ اِنِّیْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ.
وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلٰی الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ لَا فَقَالَ اَنْبِئُوْنِیْ بِاَسْمَآءِ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ اِنْ
كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِیْنَ. قَالُوْۤا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَاۤ اِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ط اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَلِیْمُ الْحَكِیْمُ. قَالَ
یٰۤاٰدَمُ اَنْبِئْهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ ح فَلَمَّآ اَنْبَاَهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ لَا قَالَ اَلَمْ اَقُلْ لَّكُمْ اِنِّیْۤ اَعْلَمُ غَیْبَ
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ لَا وَاَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُوْنَ.

When your Sustainer said to the angels: "I am going to make a vicegerent in the earth," the angels said: "Are You going to place in the earth one who makes mischief therein and sheds blood, while we continue proclaiming Your praises and remember Your pure Self?" He said: "Surely I know that which you do not know." Allāh taught Ādam the names of all things. He then placed all those things before the angels and said: "Tell Me the names of these things if you are truthful." They said: "Glory be to You! We do not know except what You have taught us. Surely You alone are all-knowing, all-wise. He said: "O Ādam! Tell the angels the names of those things." When he told them their names, He said: "Didn't I tell you that I have full knowledge of the concealed things of the heavens and

the earth? And that I know what you disclose and what you conceal?”¹

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا

It is He who has created for you all that is in the earth.²

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ

Say: “Who has forbidden the beauty of Allāh which He created for His servants, and the good things of food?”³

In order for man to fulfil the responsibilities which come with this important and delicate position, and to complete the specific purpose for which he was created, he does not have to engage in the continuous remembrance of Allāh *ta’ālā*; and stand, bow, prostrate and glorify Him continuously as is the case with the heavenly bodies, mountains, plants, and animals. If man ever tries to do this, he will prove his failure as Allāh’s vicegerent on this earth and prove the correctness of the objection which was made by the angels at the time of his creation and had presented their own case for their eligibility as Allāh’s vicegerents on the basis that they remain forever in His glorification, praise, remembrance and worship:

وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30-33.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 29.

³ Sūrah al-A’rāf, 7: 32.

*We continue proclaiming Your praises and remember Your pure self.*¹

A most balanced form of worship

In the light of all the above, man needed such a form or system of worship which coincides with his disposition, responsibilities, rank and status in this universe; and with the responsibility which was placed on his shoulders as a vicegerent of Allāh *ta'ālā* on earth. On one hand, worship was also necessary for him because it is the demand of his nature, the reason for his existence, the call of his inner-self, a display of his nobility and gratitude; and a need of humanity and a food for his heart and soul. On the other hand, it was also necessary that this worship be in harmony with his physical makeup, his delicate and important position, and his unique status in this universe. Furthermore, it had to be like a garment which fits him like a glove and gives him adornment. It must neither be tight nor loose, not less nor extra.

The garment of man's personality

Salāh is really that garment which is tailored exactly in line with his existence, and in which there is no excess or shortcoming.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ، وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

*Does He not know what He created? He alone is the knower of secrets, the all aware.*²

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30.

² Sūrah al-Mulk, 67: 14.

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

*We have created everything by predetermination.*¹

The number of salāhs

The method which has been chosen for salāh by divine wisdom and the Sharī'ah is a miraculous example of progressing gradually and easily towards a lofty end. Fifty salāhs were made obligatory on the occasion of Mi'rāj, and these were eventually reduced to five.

This was done so that man is always cognizant of the fact that 50 salāhs were originally prescribed for him, and that Allāh *ta'ālā* considered him capable of spending such a large portion of his time, strength, heart and mind in His worship. The person who bears this in mind and is always conscious of it will never consider the five salāhs to be too much. Instead, he will think to himself that he was considered to be capable of more than this number, and that if Allāh *ta'ālā* had not made this concession, he would have practised on the original order and carried it out without any complaining and moaning. He would think further that Allāh *ta'ālā* has been extremely kind to him by making these five salāhs equal to fifty [in reward], and that the first order is still sufficient to display man's lofty courage and high-mindedness.

An example of this in the Qur'ān

We find an affirmation of this view in the Qur'ān. Initially, the Muslims were required to remain firm

¹ Sūrah al-Qamar, 54: 49.

against an enemy which was ten times more than them in number. Subsequently, they were given a great concession and were required to remain firm against an enemy which was twice their number. Allāh ta'ālā says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ۖ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا
مِائَتِينَ ۚ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ.
الَّذِينَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا ۖ فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ
يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ.

*O Prophet! Urge the Muslims to fight. If there are twenty steadfast persons among you, they shall overcome two hundred. If there are a hundred among you, they shall overcome a thousand unbelievers for they are a people who have no understanding. Allāh has now lightened your burden and knows that there is in you a weakness. If there are a hundred steadfast persons among you, they shall overcome two hundred. If there are a thousand among you, they shall overcome two thousand by the will of Allāh. Allāh is with those who remain steadfast.*¹

Despite this concession, the first order proved to be a great aid towards instilling in the Muslims the zeal for action and the spirit of sacrifice. It constantly encouraged them to consider their lives to be insignificant and to be prepared to put themselves in danger. Although this verse is abrogated, it is still recited. The probable wisdom behind this is that through it a new courage, bravery and zeal towards action may be created in the Muslims. And this is

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 65-66.

the criterion and mark of true Muslims and obedient mujāhidūn.

Spiritual foods and medications – their dosage and times

It is essential to fulfil the five salāhs in the times which are prescribed for them by Allāh *ta'ālā*.

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا

*Surely salah is incumbent on the Muslims at its appointed times.*¹

The Qur'ān also makes reference to the different times of salāh.

There is a specified number of rak'ats for the five salāhs and it is essential to abide by it. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and his Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum after him stuck to the specified number throughout their lives on every occasion. So much so that there was no change even on the occasions of jihād and fighting. There has been such continuity, permanence and unanimity in this action and worship; the like of which cannot be found in any nation of the world and during any period of history. The Muslim nation has been preserving it and conveying it from generation to generation. It was not deferred for even a single day in the most delicate of times, during the severest of tests and the darkest of eras.

These fives salāhs at their appointed times with their specified number of rak'ats are actually spiritual foods and health-giving injections which have been prescribed to man by their Creator and Master – the

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 103.

all-wise and all-knowing Allāh. He is not merely a doctor for the souls, He is their creator and maker. Thus, we have to submit before His wisdom without any hesitance and complaint, and then remain firm and steadfast on it. The salāhs have to be performed in the exact number as prescribed by Allāh *ta'ālā*, and they have to be fulfilled at the times laid down by Him. The mysteries which lie in these times, the divine manifestations, rains of mercy, effulgence and means of spiritual progress which are found in them is known to none apart from Allāh *ta'ālā* and His Messenger sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

From among the wide-ranging objectives in specifying these times is that the idolaters used to worship their false gods (sun, stars, rocks, fire, etc.) in these times. This is why we have been commanded to worship the One Allāh in these times.

When man considers it essential to follow the advice of doctors and physicians, and to adhere to the dosages prescribed by them – although they are humans just like them, their experiences are limited and their diagnoses are estimated – then what should be our attitude to the order of the all-wise and all-knowing Being whose status is:

الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى

*He who gave to everything its form and then guided it.*¹

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ، وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 50.

*Does He not know what He created? He alone is the knower of secrets, the all aware.*¹

The wisdom behind the ṣalāh times

Great wisdom is concealed in the repetition of ṣalāhs and their performance after short intervals. There is a complete and wholesome spiritual nourishment for the human self, and a total arrangement for saving man from heedlessness, and the attacks of materialism on the heart and soul. While explaining the wisdom behind this, Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib rahimahullāh writes:

The ummat's supervision and its life-system cannot be sound unless it is regulated and managed after short intervals. So much so that waiting for ṣalāh and making preparations for it long before its time is a part of the effulgence of ṣalāh and one is considered to be already in ṣalāh. In this way, a lot of time is included within the circle of ṣalāh. We have experienced that the person who goes to sleep at night with the intention of waking up for tahajjud will at least not sleep like animals. In the same way, if a person has concern for ṣalāh or any other act of devotion, he will stay aloof from falling into animalistic tendencies. The objective of the following statement of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is also the same:

¹ Sūrah al-Mulk, 67: 14.

من تعارَّ من الليل

The one who wakes up at night...

رَجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

*Men whom neither trade nor sale can
divert from the remembrance of Allāh.¹*

Importance of ṣalāh in Islam

These are the wisdoms behind Allāh's injunctions before which we have to submit. We must firmly believe that ṣalāh is the greatest obligation of Allāh *ta'ālā* on His servants. It is a pillar of Islam. It is the point of distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims.

It is a prerequisite for salvation and a preserver of *īmān*. Allāh *ta'ālā* considers it to be from among the fundamental prerequisites for guidance and piety. He says:

الم. ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۖ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ. الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ.

*Alif. Lām. Mīm. There is no doubt in this book. (It)
guides those who fear. Who believe in the unseen and
establish ṣalāh. And what We provided them as
sustenance, they spend (thereof).²*

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى.

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 37.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 1-3.

*Successful indeed is he who purifies [himself] and remembers the name of his Sustainer, then offers ṣalāh.*¹

While speaking about those with evil characteristics, the Qur'ān excludes those who preserve ṣalāh. Allāh ta'ālā says:

إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ

*Except those who are observant of ṣalāh, who remain constant in their ṣalāh.*²

The Qur'ān speaks about the successful Muslims as follows:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ

*Those who are watchful of their ṣalāh.*³

It refers to the inmates of the Hell-fire as follows:

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ، قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

*What has caused you to fall into Hell? They will reply: "We were not of those who offered ṣalāh."*⁴

The hypocrites are described thus:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالًا ۚ
يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.

¹ Sūrah al-A'lā, 87: 14-15.

² Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, 70: 22-23.

³ Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 9.

⁴ Sūrah al-Muddaththir, 74: 42-43.

Surely the hypocrites try to deceive Allāh and He will deceive them. When they stand up for ṣalāh they stand up reluctantly in order to show the people and they do not remember Allāh but little.¹

Ṣalāh is compulsory forever and in every condition on every free person and slave, rich and poor, sick and healthy, traveller and non-traveller. No mature person can be excluded from it under any condition. On the other hand, fasting, ḥajj and zakāh have certain prerequisites and conditions, and there are specific times for them. Ṣalāh is compulsory even when on the battlefield. The ṣalāh which is performed in such a situation is known as ṣalātul khauf. Allāh *ta'ālā* makes reference to it as follows:

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ ۖ إِنَّ خِيفَتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۖ إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا. وَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ ۚ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۚ وَالدِّينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرَضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۚ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا. فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَرُغُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۚ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا.

When you are travelling in the land there is no sin on you in reducing something from your ṣalāh if you fear that the unbelievers will afflict you. Surely the unbelievers are your open enemies. When you are

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 142.

present among them and you lead them in prayer, a group of them should stand with you and carry their weapons with them. Once they prostrate, they should move away from you and the second group which did not offer its salāh should come. They should offer their salāh with you and take their precautions and weapons. The unbelievers wish that you are oblivious of your weapons and possessions so that they may pounce upon you at once. There is no sin on you if you are troubled by rain or you are ill that you lay down your weapons and take your precautions. Surely Allāh has prepared for the unbelievers a humiliating punishment. Once you have completed your salāh, remember Allāh standing, sitting and lying down. Then when there is no fear, establish the salāh. Surely salāh is incumbent on the Muslims at its appointed times.¹

حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى ۖ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ. فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا
 جَ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ.

Be watchful of all the prayers and of the middle prayer. And stand before Allāh with respect. If you have fear of anyone, pray on foot or while riding. Then when you are secure, remember Allāh as He has taught you that which you did not know.²

The need to be constant in salāh

Salāh is an obligation which does not fall off from even a Prophet and Messenger of Allāh *ta'ālā*, let

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 101-103.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 238-239.

alone a friend of Allāh (walī) and one striving in His cause. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

Continue worshipping your Sustainer until the absolute and certain matter (death) comes to you.

If anyone assumes that he has reached the level of certainty and rendered various services to Islam, so this obligation no longer applies to him, then he is really putting himself into destruction, and inviting a serious danger to himself.

The similitude of a person neglecting ṣalāh because of knowledge

A person who discards ṣalāh because of some achievement, service or spiritual state is similar to a senior scholar who is on a boat. On the assumption that he is very learned, he removes a length of timber from the boat by thinking to himself that there is no need for it, and that removing one will not cause any harm. He considers it to be unnecessary and of no use, and forcefully breaks it and removes it. His foolishness causes the boat together with all who are on board to drown and sink.

The reason behind the order to preserve ṣalāh and be punctual with it

Ṣalāh guarantees preservation of one's īmān and Dīn, maintaining a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*, and remaining in the circle of Islam and the general body of Muslims. Why is this the case? The reality of it is known to Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. A very pious and erudite scholar (Shaykh Sharaf ad-Dīn Yahyā Munyarī *rahimahullāh*) explains this point through a most admonitory story.

Understand it as follows: A person built a house on the top of a mountain where there are various types of bounties. When it was his time to depart from this world, he summoned his son and advised him thus: “You may do whatever alterations and improvements you want to this house. However, there is a portion of a fragrant grass which I am leaving inside the house. You must not remove it even if it turns dry.” With the arrival of spring, the mountain and the surrounding fields turned lush and green. Many fragrant plants and grasses sprouted which were far more fragrant and fresh than the grass which was inside the house. Many of the flowers and plants from outside were brought into the house. These perfumed the entire house. The fragrance of the old dry grass disappeared in the presence of these fresh plants. The son thought to himself: My father had placed this grass inside the house so that its fragrance may spread and perfume the whole house. This dry grass is of no use now. He therefore instructed for it to be thrown outside. The moment the dry grass was removed from the house, a black snake emerged from a hole, bit the son and he died.

The reason for this is that the grass had two benefits. (1) Giving off a fragrance. (2) No matter where it is, a snake does not go near it. It was like an antidote for the snake. No one knew this special quality of the grass. The boy was proud over his intelligence. He assumed that what is not within his knowledge is not in the treasure of Allāh’s power. He did not know the import of the verse:

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

*You have been granted very little knowledge.*¹

He died through the deception of his intelligence.

This is the similitude of the one who discards ṣalāh. If anyone thinks that he does not need ṣalāh and that he has realized the objectives for which ṣalāh is prescribed; or that he is rendering sterling services to Islam and Muslims, engrossed in worship and devotional practices, is waging jihād, or is fully occupied in some movement of inviting to Allāh *ta'ālā*; he relies on all this and scorns ṣalāh, considers it unnecessary and disregards it, then he is standing on the edge of destruction. All his deeds and services will not only go to waste, but cause his destruction. He is like a goat or sheep which separates itself from the main flock, wanders to a distant place and falls prey to a wolf.

Ṣalāh to a believer is like water to a fish

Ṣalāh is actually the satisfaction and completion of that human nature and demand which we can refer to as the feeling of weakness, need, compulsion, supplication, coming into the protection of that one Allāh and placing our foreheads at the threshold of the One who is all-powerful, independent, generous, merciful, kind, a protector, a giver, all-knowing, all-aware, all-hearing. Ṣalāh is actually the satisfaction of the demand of gratitude, appreciation, loyalty, love for Allāh, servitude and submission, humility and humbleness which is embedded in man and is the most valuable pearl in humanity.

¹ Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 85.

In this regard, a believer can be compared to a fish whose life is attached to water. Even if it is taken out forcefully from the water, it will remain restless and in need of water. The moment it gets an opportunity, it will jump into the water. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam makes reference to this reality in the following statement:

جعلت قرة عيني في الصلوة

*The coolness and delight of my eyes has been placed in ṣalāh.*¹

Similarly, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said to Hadrat Bilāl radiyallāhu 'anh:

يا بلال أقم الصلوة أرحنا بها

*O Bilāl! Call out the iqāmah for ṣalāh and give us comfort through it.*²

The refuge and haven for a believer

Ṣalāh to a believer is a greater refuge than a loving mother who comforts and provides solace to her child. It is more consoling and reassuring than a lap which is forever open for a weak, helpless and vulnerable orphan. Whenever a child perceives danger, something or someone vexes him, he experiences hunger and thirst, or is afraid of something; he immediately rushes to his mother and sticks to her. He sits in her lap and thinks to himself that he is now safe from everyone and everything. In

¹ Nasa'i.

² Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb al-Adab.

the same way, ṣalāh is the greatest refuge and haven for a believer. It is a strong rope which is extended by his Creator to him. If he wishes, he can hold on firmly to that rope and obtain the guarantee for his safety and protection. It is the food for his soul, the remedy for his pain, the bandage for his wound, the cure for his illness, and his greatest weapon and refuge. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

*O believers! Seek help through patience and prayer, surely Allāh is with the patient.*¹

Whenever Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was faced with a problem, he would turn to ṣalāh. Hadrat Hudhayfah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that when Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam experienced any worry, he would immediately stand up for ṣalāh.² Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that when a strong wind blew at night, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam would proceed to the masjid and remain there until the wind subsided. Similarly, when there was a solar or lunar eclipse, he would remain occupied in ṣalāh until the eclipse passed.³

Abū Dāwūd contains a narration in which Nadar relates that once during the time of Hadrat Anas radiyallāhu 'anhu a pitch darkness pervaded everything. I presented myself to him and said: "O

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 153.

² Abū Dāwūd.

³ Tabarānī.

Abū Hamzah! Did this ever happen during the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*?” He replied: “Even if there was a strong dust-storm, we used to hasten to the masjid and seek refuge there out of fear that the Resurrection is arriving.”

The Sahābah’s attachment to ṣalāh and their sacrificing the most beloved of things for its sake was fully known to the idolaters of that time. Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* narrates: We were with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* in a jihād against the Juhaynah tribe who fought very strongly...(the ending words of the Hadīth are): they used to say: “The time of that ṣalāh will come soon – that ṣalāh which is more beloved to them than their own children.”¹

The body, mind and heart – all three are represented in ṣalāh

Ṣalāh is not made up of just a few bodily movements or a dry lifeless ritual which is devoid of a soul and life. It is also not a military discipline in which one’s will and choice have no influence. It is an action which encompasses the body, mind and heart. All three are wisely and justly represented. The body is allocated the standing, bowing and prostrating postures. The tongue is allocated recitation of the Qur’ān and glorification of Allāh *ta’ālā*. The mind is deputed to ponder and reflect. The heart has to be humble, submissive and dutiful. All three are mentioned in the Qur’ān. Reference to the bodily actions is made in the following verses:

¹ Muslim.

وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

*Stand before Allāh with respect.*¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

*O believers! Bow down and prostrate, and worship your Sustainer and do good so that you may succeed.*²

Reference is made to the actions of the heart in the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ.

*O believers! Do not approach salāh at a time when you are intoxicated until you begin to understand what you say.*³

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

*Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their salāh.*⁴

تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ.

*Their sides remain away from their sleeping places, calling on their Sustainer with fear and longing. And they spend out of what We provided for them.*¹

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 238.

² Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 77.

³ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 43.

⁴ Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 1-2.

Insisting on just one of the three is ignorance and deviation

Man is made up of a body, mind and heart. Based on this, ṣalāh which is the greatest manifestation of Dīn contains a representation of three of human nature's fundamental departments. Some creeds, spiritual devotees, and Jews of the last era consider ṣalāh to be merely a few bodily movements. A few philosophical and oriental mystics classify it solely as a form of reflection, pondering and meditation. Yet other Christian monks and pseudo Muslim Sufis confine ṣalāh to humility, submission, crying and supplicating, and yearning and love. And they are quite smug with this belief. However, if we were to look at all these groups carefully, we will conclude that they have deviated from the original reality of ṣalāh, and have no knowledge whatsoever about the comprehensive and miraculous system of ṣalāh.

The duty of reformers, educators and leaders of religious movements

It is the duty of this ummat, especially its 'ulamā' and spiritual mentors, not to allow this legacy and valuable treasure to go pass. Notwithstanding the changes and revolutions of time, and the violent attacks of materialism; this light must never be allowed to be extinguished at any price. This is because if it is lost, it can never be made up by the greatest treasures of juridical rulings, knowledge of the mysteries of the Shari'ah, magical orations, eloquent writings or anything else. The efforts and movements for renewal, revival, rectification and reformation can only succeed when this ember of love, īmān and conviction is rekindled in the masses

¹ Sūrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16.

and the 'ulamā'. And some flames of propagation and training, jihād and striving, and a genuine ṣalāh which is filled with humility and submission are recreated – these very elements which were the greatest peculiarity of the early generations of Muslims and their most powerful strength. It was this element of ṣalāh which taught them to stand before their Allāh with respect, love, hope and fear before it taught them to stand bravely before their enemies. The imām of Madīnah Munawwarah, Imām Mālik ibn Anas *rahimahullāh* rightly said:

لن يصلح آخر هذه الأمة إلا ما أصلح أولها.

The latter part of this ummat can only be rectified by the thing which rectified the first part of this ummat.

Allāh ta'ālā says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their ṣalāh.¹

Zakāh

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ

If they repent, establish ṣalāh and continually give zakāh, they are your brothers in religion.²

The relationship between man and his Creator

The relationship which exists between man and his Creator is a relationship for which there is no

¹ Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 1-2.

² Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 11.

parallel, no basis or measurement from the relationships which we are accustomed to. The most we can say is that it is a relationship between the One who is all-merciful, most affectionate, most generous and all-mighty on one hand; and one who is needy, insignificant, bankrupt, and totally incapable. The perfect attributes of that affectionate Sustainer, His all-powerful actions, perfect divinity, love, kindness and endless affection demand that the least man can do is to sacrifice his heart and life for Him. He must be genuinely prepared to sacrifice not only his wealth and property for Him, but his heart and soul as well.

Manifestations of Divinity

We now have to ponder over Allāh's all-encompassing divinity, mercy, guidance, kindness, affection and generosity. It is Allāh *ta'ālā* alone who conferred man with a suitable and most appropriate existence, and gave him the ability to derive benefit from the treasures, means and resources of the earth. To this end, Allāh *ta'ālā* established a most delicate, fine, wise and miraculous system. He placed within man the zeal to search and inquire, the ability to utilize those means and treasures, to systemize and organize them, to exchange them, and to undertake mutual transactions with them.

Allāh's attribute of divinity and guidance is manifested in all categories and classes of creation in the universe.

الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى

*He who gave to everything its form and then guided it.*¹

However, man (who is also Allāh's vicegerent on earth) received the largest share of this, and he is the greatest manifestation of Allāh's divinity.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا.

*We honoured the progeny of Ādam and carried them by land and sea, and We provided them with wholesome things, and gave them preference over many of whom We created with a marked preference.*²

Allāh *ta'ālā* made the land level for man and the environment conducive to him. He created in man the enthusiasm, zeal and capability to derive benefit from the hidden forces of the earth, its concealed wealth, liquid treasures and dry metals [like gold, silver and platinum].

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ

*It is He who made the earth subdued for you. So walk about in its regions and eat of His provision.*³

Those things which are essentials for man's life (whether he lives in a city or a rural area, whether he is a progressive and modern man or one who is

¹ Sūrah Ṭā Hā, 20: 50.

² Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 70.

³ Sūrah al-Mulk, 67: 15.

subdued) and without which life is unimaginable – like grains, water, fire – have not only been subjugated for man but made freely available to him.

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ. ءَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ. لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ. إِنَّا لَمُعْرِضُونَ. بَلْ نَحْنُ مُحْرِقُونَ. أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ. ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْزِلُونَ. لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ أَمْحًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ. أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِي تُورُونَ. ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْشِئُونَ. نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكَرَةً وَنَمَاحًا لِلْمُقْوِينَ.

Just consider what you sow. Do you cultivate it or are We the cultivators? Had We willed We would have reduced it to trampled grass. You would then be left talking [in remorse]. [Saying]: “We have been left in debt. In fact, we have become deprived.” Just consider the water which you drink. Have you sent it down from the clouds or is it We who send it down? Had We willed, We would have made it salty. Why, then, are you not grateful? Just consider the fire which you kindle. Have you created its tree or are We the creators? It is We who made that tree a reminder and an article of use for the jungle-dwellers.¹

The peculiarity of human nature

As opposed to inanimate creations and animals, Allāh ta‘ālā has placed in man an intense desire for beauty, exquisiteness, power, variety and progress through which the splendour of this life continues and its life-blood is hot and flowing. All the constructions which we seen in the world, the progress, the variety, the desire for new things, new inventions and new discoveries are really the

¹ Sūrah al-Wāqī‘ah, 56: 63-73.

consequences of this intense desire. Allāh ta'ālā says:

كَلَّا نُمِدُّ هَؤُلَاءِ وَهَؤُلَاءِ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ ^ط وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا. اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ^ط وَلِلْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا.

To each one We bestow, to these and to those, from the gift of your Sustainer. The gift of your Sustainer was never withheld by anyone. See how We excelled one over the other. In the latter abode there are greater ranks and more excellence.¹

Allāh ta'ālā created within man the desire to help and support each other, to be considerate of each others rights, to uphold the peace and stability of the country, and to strive for lawful sustenance and the acquisition of collective benefits. No class of humanity and no era of history was ever devoid of this desire and deprived of this capability.

لَا يَلِفُ قُرَيْشٍ، الْفِيهِمْ رَحَلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ، فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ، الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَأَمَّنَّهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ.

For that the Quraysh were kept composed. Keeping them composed in their winter and summer journeys. Let them, therefore, worship the Sustainer of this house. Who fed them in [the days of] hunger and gave them peace in [the days of] fear.

Nothing belongs to man

Intelligence, logic, a sound mind, these accepted facts and realities, and this natural situation (in which man's incapability, bankruptcy, weakness and

¹ Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 20-21.

helplessness have been manifested to their furthest extent; and Allāh's absolute divinity has been displayed to its full), all demand that nothing be considered to be in man's ownership, and nothing be attributed to him. In short, he be treated like that suckling infant and small child who is brought up in his parents' lap and walks by holding on to their fingers. In fact, if we were to ponder carefully, we will conclude that in this massive universe and in front of that great, supreme and all-powerful Creator; man is weaker and more insignificant than that infant who is brought up in his parents' lap and drags himself at their feet. Allāh's status is much higher than the superficial owners and mentors of this world.

وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

*His attribute is the most exalted in the heavens and the earth. And He alone is mighty, wise.*¹

Thus, whatever is considered to be in man's ownership, or whatever he – in his ignorance or unawareness – attributes to himself will all have to be attributed to that Being who created him, and gave him limited authority over those things, for specific purposes, for a limited time, and to be used in a specific method.

Islam's economic system

Bearing in mind this reality (which pervades all facts and realities, and which operates in the religious, moral and economic systems of the world), the Qur'ān hands over all human transactions to Allāh

¹ Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 27.

ta'ālā while man has been made responsible for just one thing, and that is his position of being Allāh's vicegerent.

Allāh *ta'ālā* sometimes addresses Muslims as follows:

وَأَتُوهُمْ مِنْ مَّالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ

*Give them of the wealth of Allāh which He gave you.*¹

Sometimes He addresses them thus:

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلِفِينَ فِيهِ

*Spend of that which He has made you trustees.*²

The above verse clearly announces that the true owner and heir of all those things is Allāh *ta'ālā*. Thus, if man spends a few pennies in Allāh's cause, he has no right whatsoever to vex pride and be boastful.

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَنْ لَا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

*What is the matter with you that you do not spend in the cause of Allāh when all that is in the heavens and the earth will be inherited by Allāh?*³

This situation demands, in fact, the natural outcome of it is that man withdraws from his ownership, he does not have the slightest right over his land and

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 33.

² Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 7.

³ Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 10.

properties, and he becomes totally restricted, bound and dependent.

The distinguishing feature of present day Islamic society

Islamic society – despite its defects, weaknesses and various illnesses which Muslim reformers have been continually treating – still surpasses other societies as regards its concern for the welfare and wellbeing of others, its charitable works and donations. By virtue of Islamic teachings, mutual welfare, support and coming to the assistance of others are deeply embedded in its blood and veins. In comparison to other societies, it is most free from the worship of material comforts and the demands of the stomach. In addition to this, Islamic society has no shortage of people who raise the flag of rebellion against material worship and make efforts to bring such people within the moral values of the religion of Islam. Consequently, commercial rivalry, personal selfishness, and wealth-worship are far less in Islamic societies than they are in societies which do not believe in a life after this life, who have no purpose in life apart from luxuries and comforts, and who are running madly behind imaginary economic values.

This is a distinguishing feature despite present day Islamic society's shortcomings and weaknesses. The occasions for choosing social justice and the highest human values are found more in Islamic society than in other societies. The fundamental reason for this – in some way or the other – is a value for Islamic life and that bond which is based on *īmān* which tied all those parts together.

Voluntary and natural welfare, or forced and limited equality?

The common element in the economic and so-called progressive movements which have come into existence in the present era is that they do not trust man and humanity. The proponents and defenders of these movements give preference to forced and limited equality over the natural and voluntary emotions of showing concern for the welfare of fellow humans. They have disregarded the fact that wealth alone is not man's need. And that social equality and equality in wealth alone can neither fill the vacuum of the feelings and desires of his heart nor can it treat every ailment. Man has a far greater need for feelings of general concern for his fellow humans than for equality in the means of income and means of productivity. Sometimes, a single tear which is shed for a broken heart is far more effective than gold, jewellery, pearls and houses. Every human needs the help and support of his brother, and the latter also needs the help of the former. Both share each others pains and challenges. Man also needs someone with fine feelings and concerns. He needs a warm heart and a smiling face. He needs good mannerisms, whole-heartedness and a joyful mien. If these points are taken into consideration, we will realize that Rasūlullāh's teachings cover all the categories of showing concern for others and seeing to their needs, and encompass their most intricate and delicate forms. Furthermore, his teachings present the best and most truthful image of human feelings. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* says while speaking about concern for fellow humans, good works and types of charity:

تعدل بين الإثنين صدقة، وتعين الرجل في دابته فتحمله عليها أو ترفع له عليها متاعه صدقة، والكلمة الطيبة صدقة، وبكل خطوة تمشيها إلى الصلوة صدقة، وتميط الأذى عن الطريق صدقة. (صحيحين)

If you mete out justice between two, it is charity. If you help a man by carrying him onto his animal or loading his goods onto it, it is charity. A good word is charity. Every step which you take to ṣalāh is charity. If you remove a harmful object from the path, it is charity.

Another Hadīth states:

“If you help a person who is working or assist one who does not know how to do a certain task, this is also charity.” I asked: “O Rasūlullāh! What if I am so weak to do any of these tasks?” He replied: “At least keep people safe from your mischief. This will be a charity for your self.” (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

“To meet your brother with a smiling face is charity. Enjoining good and forbidding evil is charity. Benefiting a person who is scorned is charity. Removing a rock, thorn, bone, etc. from a path is charity. Filling your brother’s bucket with your own is also charity.”

To give preference to foreign-imported equality (which is imposed by force) over man’s natural concern for fellow humans, of which the heart is filled and which flows throughout society like blood, results in a society in the communist and socialist countries which is totally unaware of human fellow-feeling, and is deprived of the emotion of desiring good for others. Its members have become traders

who are mutually aloof from each other, neither does one trust the other, nor is one prepared to forfeit his rights for the other. Each one is busy spying on the other, spreading false information about the other, and preparing fabricated documents against the other. He rejoices over tragedy or misery which afflicts the other, and is saddened by his progress and success. The entire country is turned into a battlefield in which no one's life is safe, or a courthouse where no one's honour is guaranteed.

The consequence of such a situation is that the perception of responsibilities and the passion to fulfil one's responsibilities and obligations in a correct manner – in which lies human nobility and greatness – are totally absent in society. Man is totally free from all restrictions, responsibilities and obligations; and has thus become like free ranging animals who have no work apart from grazing, moving from one place to another and eating continuously. Every type of responsibility has been placed on the state, its machinery, and the country's penal laws. Society is treated like an immature child who is totally deprived of intelligence and discernment. The state alone gives and takes, and fulfils the needs of every person. Consequently, fellow-feeling, mercy, generosity, self-sacrifice, and helping each other have naturally become meaningless words. The state has taken the responsibility of guaranteeing each person's rights and fulfilling his life's needs; while people move about like deaf and dumb machines. This is why they naturally have no need left.

On the other hand, the natural and innate fellow-feeling which gushes forth from the human heart, and which results in peace, tranquillity, internal happiness, mutual trust and love, mutual

satisfaction, joy of the soul, internal contentment, pride over humanity, the desire to look at the shining angles of life, full consciousness of one's obligations and duties – all these were to be found with all their glory and in their deepest and highest forms in Islam's first society. These qualities had pervaded every department of life. However, a change in situation is not restricted to that time. Any human society which adopts this comprehensive, natural and voluntary concept of fellow-feeling; and makes it the principle and system of its life in opposition to all forced and restricted forms of "equality" will find that all its members will be mutually close, they will be well-wishers of each other, and concerned about each other's wellbeing. Each one will openly acknowledge the other, and will gladly testify in favour of the other. Every generation will testify to the greatness and virtue of its preceding generation, and it will pray for its acceptance and forgiveness. Allāh *ta'ālā* says with reference to such people:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

*Those who came after them (also have a right), and (they) make this prayer: "O our Sustainer! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any malice against the believers. O our Sustainer! You alone are kind, merciful."*¹

This is that Islamic society in which every individual is a mirror for his brother, who wants to see his brother free from every accusation, every suspicion,

¹ Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 10.

and every defect and fault. He only likes for him what he likes for himself.

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا ۖ وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ

*Why, then, did the believing men and the believing women not think good of their own people when they heard it, and say: "This is a clear slander."?*¹

The example of such a society has been described very eloquently by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. He said: "The mutual love, mercy and affection which exists among Muslims is like a body. When any part of the body has a complaint, the entire body responds with fever and sleeplessness." (Bukhārī and Muslim)

This is a society wherein every member is a guard of the other, has the quality of integrity, is noble-minded, trustworthy, and one on whom you can rely. A Hadīth states: "A Muslim is a brother to a fellow Muslim. He does not cheat him, he does not speak lies about him, he does not disgrace him and he does not abandon him when he needs to be helped. The honour, wealth and life of a Muslim is unlawful to another Muslim." (Tirmidhī)

On the other hand, life in many countries has become a torment and an example of Hell.

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا

Whenever a (new) group will enter (Hell), it will curse the other group.

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 12.

Whenever a dictator ascends the throne, he curses his predecessor and considers it his duty and obligation to accuse him of treason, enmity towards the state and treachery. Anyone who gets power for even one day, wants to exact the worst types of revenge from his enemies and opponents. He considers every type of blood-shedding, oppression and tyranny against them to be lawful. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ط وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ.

*When he turns away from you, he speeds through the land so that he may make mischief therein and destroy crops and lives. Allāh dislikes corruption.*¹

Now if anyone likes this arduous, long, bitter and bound-to-fail path, then the following statement of the Qur'ān suffices for him:

أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَى بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ ط اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ

*Do you want to take that which is lower in exchange for that which is better? Go down to any town, then, you shall find what you ask for.*²

Note: By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā explained these points in a most beautiful manner. These reflect his knowledge and cognition, and the loftiness and extent of his heart and vision. May Allāh *ta'ālā* confer us with a full share of these qualities. Āmīn. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward Hadrat

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 205.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 61.

Maulānā *rahimahullāh* with the best of rewards.
Āmīn.

Fasting

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ.

*O believers! Ordained for you is fasting as it was ordained for those before you, so that you may become pious.*¹

Neither animals nor angels

Man is a creation between animals and angels. The dispositions of these two opposite creations have been very delicately placed in man. Man is a unique conglomeration of angelic qualities and animalistic peculiarities. Neither angels nor animals are suited to the position for which man has been appointed, the objectives whose completion Allāh *ta'ālā* handed over to him, and for which he has been given the necessary capabilities. It is that august position of vicegerency and worship which the Qur'ān makes reference to in the following manner:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِیْفَةً ۖ قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا
وَسَیُفْسِدُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ اِنِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ.

When your Sustainer said to the angels: "I am going to make a vicegerent in the earth," the angels said: "Are You going to place in the earth one who makes mischief therein and sheds blood, while we continue proclaiming Your praises and remember Your pure

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 183.

Self?” He said: “Surely I know what you do not know.”¹

Allāh ta‘ālā says elsewhere:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَتَيْنَ أَنْ يُحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا
وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا.

We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it. Man undertook to bear it; he is very merciless, immature.²

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ، مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا.

I created jinn and man solely for My worship. I do not want any sustenance from them nor do I want them to feed Me.³

The demands and essentials of vicegerency

The position of vicegerency not only requires compatibility with the creature who is being given this responsibility, but also the place where he will live and where he is to fulfil this obligation. It also has to have total compatibility with the creation over whom he is being appointed and whose supervision he is made in charge of. As regards the first, man has absorbed and accepted those characteristics and lofty attributes which we can classify as purity, loftiness, independence, mercy and kindness,

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30.

² Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 72.

³ Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56-57.

affection and fellow-feeling, patience and forbearance, strength and power, cleanliness and purity, and safety and security. The proof for this is that throughout his long history, man has always perceived great delight and honour in these noble characteristics. Those who bore these qualities were looked up with respect. If he ever fell short in these qualities and did not himself possess them, then he accorded respect and honour to those possessed them, and considered them to be fortunate, successful and triumphant.

Man also absorbed the peculiarities and dispositions of others. He joined them in their weaknesses and accommodated them solely so that they could consider him to be partners in their pains and troubles. He must be able to derive benefit from the treasures and buried wealth of the land, from the bounties of the world and its pure things; and spend them in the correct places. For example, the desire to eat, drink, sexual urges, hunger, thirst, the desire for comfort, modernization, arts and crafts, variety in foods and drinks, etc. – are all embedded in man's being.

Conflict between the body and spirit

In this regard, man is a combination of body and spirit. The spirit pulls and draws him towards his original source and fountainhead. It reminds him of his position, centre, purpose and obligation. It opens to him that window from which he observes the wide extent, loftiness, delicateness and beauty of that new world. It creates an urge in his heart for it and increases his courage. It prompts him to revolt against the dense and heavy materialism, and to break himself from that golden cage and to fly in the

limitlessness which has no link with base materialism. It calls upon man to occasionally (even if once a year) free himself from that monotonous routine of eating and drinking for a few moments of his life, to taste the joy of hunger and thirst despite the abundance of sustenance, and to feel that deliciousness which cannot be experienced even from the most delicious foods and drinks. During this brief spell, he separates himself from that monotonous and colourless system of life, and devotes himself to inner contentment, tranquillity of the heart, purity of the self, freedom from the demands of the stomach, and emancipation from sensual desires. It considers this time to be the real value of life, freshness and lightness of the self, and its real joy. Its anxiety and yearning for this time can be likened to the yearning of a bird for its nest after it spent the entire day flying around, or like the yearning of a fish for water. All this is the miracle of that spirit which was transferred into man from the unseen and sanctified world.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ط قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

*They ask you about the spirit. Say: "The spirit is by the order of my Sustainer."*¹

وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي

*And I breathed into him of My spirit.*²

¹ Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 85.

² Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 29.

On the other hand, the body too pulls man towards its source which is the ground, and which holds every type of filth and baseness. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ

*We created man from sounding clay which is made of fetid mud.*¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* says elsewhere:

فَاسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَهْمْ أَوْشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ مَنْ خَلَقْنَا. إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ لَازِبٍ.

*Now ask them: "Is it more difficult to create them or all that We created?" We created them out of a sticky clay.*²

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ

*He created man from sounding clay like the clay of earthenware.*³

When the spirit's hold over man becomes weak, and its effects wane or disappear completely; and the reins of control come into the hands of the body, then man begins to flow uncontrollably in the current of carnal desires and luxurious living. Like free cattle, he puts his mouth everywhere, and becomes insane in his efforts to fulfil his carnal desires, and demands for food and drink. He resorts to many formalities, new inventions and intricacies for the satisfaction of his lusts. He uses his

¹ Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 26.

² Sūrah as-Sāffāt, 37: 11.

³ Sūrah ar-Rahmān, 55: 14.

intelligence to develop such new ways and avenues, that he breaks all the limits of intellect, norms, medicine, health, the law and the Shari'ah. All his capabilities and intelligence are squandered in trying to make food more delicious, more elaborate, and more variegated. He invents laxatives and medications which cause hunger so that he can eat more and more, and have his food digested as quickly as possible. And so that this system continues without a pause.

Consequently, despite his progress and intelligence, and despite his knowledge, material prosperity and lofty status, he becomes like a beast wandering about in the fields. His course of action is restricted between just two things – the dining room and the toilet. He does not know any other beginning and end apart from these two. He knows no other “ṭawāf” and “sa'iy”. All desires apart from eating and drinking are dead in him. All other feelings apart from the feeling of luxurious living and comforts become paralysed. All his thoughts are centred around one thing. He earns solely so that he can eat more. And he eats so that he can earn more. The Qur'an paints a picture of such humans or animal-like humans. There can be no truer and finer picture than this. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ.

As for those who are unbelievers, they are enjoying themselves and eating as animals eat. And the fire is their abode.¹

¹ Sūrah Muḥammad, 47: 12.

The fact of the matter is that this is the disposition and peculiarity of the body which is deprived of the light of spirituality and prophet-hood. It worships its carnal desires and inclines to its original source. It advances automatically towards baseness and falls to the ground.

وَأْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ. وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ ۖ إِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثُ ۚ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ۖ فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ.

Relate to them the condition of the person to whom We had given Our verses, but he cast them off. Satan then pursued him and he thus became of those who have strayed. Had We willed, We would have elevated his rank through the verses; but he clung to the earth and succumbed to his own lust. His state, therefore, is like that of a dog: if you bear upon him, he pants with his tongue lolling. If you leave him alone, he [still] pants with his tongue lolling. This is the similitude of those who belied Our verses. Recount to them, then, these incidents so that they may reflect.¹

The effects of this conflict on human life, religion and ethics

Man's religious and ethical history is in actual fact a story of this conflict. Consequently, whenever his first disposition took control, he adopted monasticism, went into the extremes of seclusion, rejected the lawful and wholesome things, imposed

¹ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 175-176.

on his self, and considered it to be the essence of good fortune to harm his body and inflict hunger and poverty on his self. He began remaining awake for entire nights, left the inhabited towns and cities and began living in the jungles. Stories of Christian monks of Europe in the Middle Ages are actually reflections of this notion.

وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ رِضْوَنِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا.

And their forsaking of the world which they innovated. We did not prescribe it upon them. [They invented it] in order to seek the pleasure of Allāh. But they did not observe it as they ought to have observed it.¹

Consequently, man's body and intellect became weak, family ties were broken and human society had to face severe dangers. Man became aloof from that position of vicegerency which Allāh *ta'ālā* had placed on his shoulders. He abandoned his responsibilities of striving and working and made angels his ideal. Instead of angels envying man and prostrating before him, man became envious of angels.

At other times, man was so overpowered by bestial qualities, and earthly and physical inclinations, that he forsook every restriction of human intellect and the Shari'ah, freed himself from every bond of ethics and spirituality, and was swept away by the strong currents of materialism and carnal desires. He became ready to do anything and everything in his quest to satisfy his physical and carnal desires, and

¹ Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 27.

materialistic demands. In this regard, he did not even bother about any limit, amount and course.

This resulted in the freezing of his heart and soul, and the shrinking of his intellect and emotions. His stomach became so long and wide, that many a time the food of an entire family proved to be insufficient for just one person. His body gave birth to such a mechanical and imaginary stomach, and he developed such an intense bestial hunger which could not be satiated by even the largest amounts of foods.

Consequently, such tyrannies and crimes came into existence which turned man into a merciless and vicious animal of prey which not only tore apart and swallowed its fellow humans but even its own family. All the wars and battles which took place in history (apart from jihād which is fought for purely religious reasons) are really manifestations of this personal egotism, party fanaticism, greed and avarice, expansionist policies, hunger for authority, and power madness.

The destructive effects of stomach-worship

When this animalistic trait overpowers man and takes control of his life, man's feelings, emotions and inclinations are totally in its grasp, and the entire human system of life revolves around satisfaction of the stomach; there remains no obstacle between man and the fulfilment of his desires. Anything which disturbs his desires, reminds him of his destiny, prompts him towards thinking of the accounting of deeds and the concept of reward and punishment becomes weighty and difficult for him. Sometimes his entire life passes without his experiencing a tranquil heart, a vigilant mind and a

living conscience for even a single moment. Worship and remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* weigh heavily on his temperament, and he finds no delight whatsoever in such matters. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ. الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلْقُوا رَبَّهُمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ.

*Surely it is difficult except on those who are humble. Who are cognizant of the fact that they are going to be in the presence of their Sustainer, and that surely they are going to return to Him.*¹

وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى لَا يُرْأَوْنَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

*When they stand up for salāh, they stand up reluctantly in order to show the people and they remember Allāh very little.*²

Realization of man's purpose

In the courts of human history, prophet-hood remedied mankind during different periods of time and in various places on earth. This was at times when man had succumbed to extreme materialism and bestial rebelliousness, and was on the verge of destruction. That paralysed and half-dead heart which was constantly struck by the carnal self and trampled by materialism, attacked by the stomach and soiled by desires was now cleansed and purified by the fine and delicate perceptions of ethics and spirituality. Man was now re-prepared for the realization and fulfilment of his purpose in life – which is referred to as worship. Prophet-hood then

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 45-46.

² Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 142.

embellished him with that human perfection which is known as wilāyat – close friendship with Allāh *ta'ālā*. He was made eligible for that position and the completion of that mission for which he was sent into this world, and which is referred to as khilāfat or vicegerency.

This was a task which could neither be fulfilled by the sole spirituality of angels, nor animalistic materialism. To this end, the system of fasting was laid down annually which would – to a certain extent – reduce the stomach-worshipping materialism, bring back life's lost vigour, freshness and strength; and which can instil such an amount of imān and spirituality in him through which it becomes possible to maintain the balance and equilibrium in life; the carnal self can be combated, and the harms of fulfilling its demands can be put to an end. For a certain period of time, man must be able to absorb the characteristics of Allāh *ta'ālā*, obtain a small share of them, and thereby become successful. He must be able to acquire an affinity with the angels and al-Mala' al-A'lā (the highest companionship), the vast extent of the spirit and heart, and the sultanates of the heavens and earth must become his place of exercise. He must be able to acquire that new enjoyment which is far beyond, more delicate, genuine and eternal than the joy which he experiences from eating various types of sumptuous foods, eating all the time, or filling his stomach to the brim.

The objectives of fasting and its effects on life

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* sheds light on the reality of fasting in his own unique way. He writes:

The objective of fasting is for man to create within himself one of the characteristics of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is known as *ṣamadīyyat* (freedom from want). Within the limits of possibility, he must emulate the angels and keep aloof from desires because angels are pure from desires. At the same time, man's status is above that of animals. Moreover, man has been given the light of intelligence and ability to distinguish so that he can combat his carnal desires. However, in this respect he is below the rank of angels because his carnal desires overpower him most of the time. He has to undergo severe striving and effort to free himself from them. When he is swept away by the torrent of his desires, he reaches the lowest of the low and joins the animals. On the other hand, when he overpowers his carnal desires, he reaches the highest of the high and meets with the angels.

'Allāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* elaborates on this further:

The purpose of fasting is to enable man to free himself from the web of human desires and habits, and create a balance and equilibrium in his carnal powers. Through this, he must be able to acquire the supreme objective of everlasting pleasure, and purify his self for the acquisition of that eternal life. Hunger and thirst must be able to decrease the sharpness and heat of his carnal desires,

and he is reminded of the many poor people who are in need of food and drink. He narrows the paths of Shayṭān, and stops his limbs and organs from inclining to the things which would harm him in this world and in the Hereafter. In this regard, fasting is the rein of the pious, the shield of the mujāhidūn, and the spiritual exercise of the righteous and close servants of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

‘Allāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* sheds additional light on the mysteries and objectives of fasting in a most eloquent manner:

Fasting is most effective in preserving the external limbs and internal organs. The accumulation of corrupt matter causes many harms to man. Fasting protects him against these. It expels the things which are harmful to his health. It repulses the damages which are caused to the limbs and organs by desires and greed. It is most beneficial to one’s health, and aids a person in adopting a life of piety.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ.

O believers! Ordained for you is fasting as it was ordained for those before you, so that you may become pious.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 183.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ

Fasting is a shield.

Consequently, the person who is desirous of marriage but does not have the means has been advised to fast. Fasting is considered to be a treatment for him. Bearing in mind that the benefits of fasting were accepted by sound intellect and correct disposition, Allāh *ta'ālā* embellished it with His mercy and kindness solely for the protection of His servants.

He writes further:

The rectification of the heart and steadfastness are confined to treading the path to Allāh *ta'ālā* and spiritual focus. This is dependent on turning totally towards Allāh *ta'ālā* with full concentration. Thus, disturbance of the mind is most harmful to it. Overeating and drinking, excessive intermingling with people, and speaking more than necessary are the things which disturb internal concentration. Consequently, man becomes cut off from Allāh *ta'ālā* and wanders about on various other paths. Sometimes, he loses the path solely because of these reasons. Based on all these points, Allāh's mercy demanded the obligation of fasting on His servants through which his overeating and

excessive carnal desires on account of which man is deprived of reaching Allāh *ta'ālā* are cut down. By fasting, he will be able to derive benefit in both this world and the Hereafter, and his temporary and permanent abodes are not damaged in any way.

The special qualities of fasting, its virtues and its injunctions

Fasting as presented by Islam is a complete system as regards its injunctions and objectives. It guarantees the most benefit; and the wisdom and will of the all-mighty, all-knowing, all-wise and all-aware Allāh are manifested to the full.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ، وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Does He not know what He created? He alone is the knower of secrets, the all-aware.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* set aside an entire month (the month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed) for the sake of fasting. Man is ordered to fast during the day, and permitted to eat and drink at night. At that time, this was also what the Arabs understood as fasting. The universal Sharī'ah of Islam took this into consideration and applied it.

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib rahimahullāh writes:

In fasting, the extent of the day begins from true dawn and ends at sunset. This is because the calculation of the Arabs and the extent of their day are based on

¹ Sūrah al-Mulk, 67: 14.

this. This was an accepted and well-known fact among them for the fast of 'Āshūrā'. The month commences with the sighting of the crescent and ends with the sighting of the crescent. The Arabs did not calculate their months according to the solar calendar.

Why is fasting prescribed in the month of Ramaḍān?

Allāh *ta'ālā* made fasting compulsory in the month of Ramaḍān, and made both inseparable from the other. The fact of the matter is that the combination of both these blessings contains much wisdom and importance. The greatest reason is that Ramaḍān is the month in which the Qur'ān was revealed, and the wandering and lost humanity found a "true dawn". Just as the commencement of the fast is attached to the true dawn, this entire month which came as a true dawn after a long and dark night has been set aside for fasting. This is more so when this month was the most superior as regards its mercy, blessings, spirituality and spiritual affiliation. It was most deserving to be beautified and embellished with fasting during its days and worship during its nights.

There is a very deep bond and a special affinity between fasting and the Qur'ān. This is why Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to pay much more attention to recitation of the Qur'ān in Ramaḍān. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās *radīyallāhu 'anhū* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was the most generous. However, when Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* used to visit him in Ramaḍān, his generosity used to be far more than normal. Jibra'īl used to come to him in every night of Ramaḍān and they used to recite the Qur'ān. During

this period when Jibra'īl used to come to him, he used to be faster than the swift winds in his generosity and other good acts.

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* writes in one of his letters:

This month has a very special affinity with the Qur'ān. It is because of this affinity that the Qur'ān was revealed in this month. It combines every type of goodness and blessing. If all the blessings which a person acquires throughout the year were to be compared to what he acquires in this one month, the comparison will be like the ocean and a single drop of water. The acquisition of spiritual focus in this month suffices for the rest of the year, while mental disquiet and uneasiness takes the entire year in its grasp. Congratulations to those with whom this month departed happily, and unsuccessful and unfortunate are those who displeased it and deprived themselves of every type of goodness and blessing.

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhū* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “When Ramaḍān approaches, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are shut, and the Shayāṭīn are shackled.”

There are many other Aḥādīth on this subject.

A universal season of worship

All the above points have made Ramaḍān a universal season for worship, Allāh's remembrance, Qur'ān

recitation, abstinence and piety wherein every type of person – the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the lethargic and the energetic – and every group of people join each other in a spirit of togetherness, friendship and closeness. Ramadān is observed at the same time in every city, every town and every village. Its effulgence is seen in the palace of the affluent and in the hut of the poor. Consequently, there is no reason for anyone to be proud and arrogant about it, nor is there any dispute and fight over the selection of the days of fasting. Every person whom Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed with eyes can observe the beauty and might of Allāh *ta'ālā* in this vast and wide world of Islam. It seems as though the entire Muslim society has been covered by a huge canopy of effulgence and tranquillity. Even those who are a bit lazy to fast are compelled to observe the fast out of fear that they will be separated from the general body of Muslims. If they do not fast for whatever reason, they will conceal themselves and eat. Only a few flagrant sinners will eat openly and without any shame, or those who are ill or travellers and are permitted by the Shari'ah not to fast.

This is a collective and universal fast which automatically creates a harmonious and pleasant atmosphere in which the fast feels easy, the hearts become soft, and people focus on acts of worship, devotions, and various works of fellow-feeling and seeing to the wellbeing of others.

Haji

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ. لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَةٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ۖ فَكُلُوا

مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ. ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوفُوا نُذُورَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ.

Proclaim to mankind the hajj. They will come to you on foot and riding on lean camels – coming from every distant place. So that they may reach [and experience] the places of their benefit and they may mention the name of Allāh on the appointed days over whatever sacrificial animals He may have given them. Eat, then, of them and feed the poor who is in a bad condition. They should then put to an end their state of dirtiness, and fulfil their vows, and circuit this ancient House.¹

Islam – a religion of tauhīd

Islam is a religion of absolute and pure monotheism. It does not approve of any representation and agency between Allāh and the servant. It does not approve of any tangible or material thing which man places in his mind like a god, and then devotes all his attention, focus and strength to it; and clings to it. Islam neither permits intermediaries, physical manifestations, images nor idols. It neither has any priestly class, astrologers nor hermits. Allāh ta‘ālā clearly states:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ط أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ لَا فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ.

When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am near. I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me. They should therefore obey My

¹ Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 27-29.

*command and have conviction in Me so that they may come onto the virtuous path.*¹

Allāh ta'ālā says in another place:

فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ. أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ.

So worship Allāh in absolute devotion to Him. Listen! For Allāh alone is absolute devotion. As for those who have taken protectors apart from Him, [they say]: “We only worship them so that they may take us very close to Allāh.” Surely Allāh will decide between them concerning what they dispute.

In addition to this, Islam is a religion in which the loftiness of thought, purity and correctness of purpose, severance from others besides Allāh, sincerity in action are on such a standard; and its belief system is of such a level that any standard better than it and any belief system loftier than it is unimaginable. All the religions and philosophies of the world, all religious and rational systems, and the entire humanity together have failed in presenting a system like it. They could not even come near to such a standard. It is impossible to add anything to the manner in which Allāh ta'ālā described Himself in the Qur'ān:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

*There is nothing similar to Him. He alone is all-hearing, all-seeing.*¹

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 186.

The need for something visible

However, human nature being what it is, every human has this wish of being able to see something with his physical eyes, through which he can satisfy his emotion of yearning, and satisfy those intense demands of proximity, nearness, according respect and displaying submission which have always been embedded in his disposition.

The symbols of Allāh

To this end, Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed certain physical things which have some affinity with His essence. They are attributed to Him and considered to be His. The manner and intensity with which His mercies pour down on these things, and they are so manifest and clear, that no sooner man sets eyes on them, he thinks of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Furthermore, there are many incidents, actions and conditions which are connected to them; and which remind man of Allāh's signs, His favours, His religion of tauhīd, and the striving and patience of His Messengers. Allāh *ta'ālā* named these things "Sha'ā'ir Allāh" (the symbols of Allāh). He considers respect to them to be respect to Him, and disregard for them to be synonymous to disregard to Him. He not only permitted man but invited him to give vent to his hidden and concealed love, and his natural desire to see and get close through these Sha'ā'ir. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَنْ يُعِظْمُ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ.

¹ Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 11.

You have heard this. Whoever honours the symbols of Allāh, it is surely from the piety of the hearts.¹

He says in another place:

ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمْ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ.

You have heard this. Whoever honours the sacred things of Allāh, it is best for him with his Sustainer.²

Revolt against the worshippers of the intellect and materialism

It is sometimes necessary for man to revolt against his composed, obstinate and rigid intellect. There is no harm in this because a life without rebellion and revolution is no life. Man needs to break the shackles of customs, habits, likes and dislikes, self-innovated laws, superficial cultures, shallow formalities, customary conventions, that imposing system of a harsh merciless society and those superficial restrictions; and free himself from them. The reins which for quite some time were in the control of the intellect must be handed over for a short while to the yearning of the heart. He has to occasionally move out into the jungles and deserts as lovers do for their beloveds. Sometimes he needs to display that madness and lunacy which are the salient features of lunatics and loyalists. After all, when society and customs have enslaved a person, who is there who could liberate him? If a person is enslaved to his habits, desires and likes, how can he be called a monotheist? The same can be said about the one

¹ Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 32.

² Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 30.

who always relies on his intellect, and never feels a desire for obedience and submission to anything unless he can ascertain its physical and material benefits. Hajj in its special form goes totally against those who worship the intellect and materialism, who are enslaved to a system and discipline which are self-formulated, and that routine of life which they are so enamoured by.

The purpose of hajj is to create within man the concept of belief in the unseen, and the zeal to carry out an order without any “ifs and buts” solely because it is an order. And to remove his intellect for a short while from that position where it measures everything on the scale of logic, philosophy, debates, arguments and proofs and evidences; where it resorts to logic and evidence at every time and place.

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* has explained the reality of hajj and the spirit (which can be referred to as belief in the unseen and total obedience to orders) in a most unique and eloquent manner. He draws a beautiful and attractive picture of it through his matchless pen. He has delved into the depths of this important pillar, explained it most excellently, and presented to us its core in a manner which was overlooked by many scholars and thinkers of the past and present. He writes:

The shape and design of the Ka’bah is like a royal court to which lovers and those struck with separation, come from every difficult terrain and far off place in a haggard and dishevelled state. They bow their heads in submission before the Lord of the House, fully conscious of their insignificance, submitting before His greatness and might. They come with this knowledge and acknowledgement

that He is too pure and sublime to be confined to any house or four-walled structure, or encompassed by any city. This is so that their servitude and crying before Him may reach its limit, and they are not left wanting in their obedience, submission, surrender and contentment.

This is why they are required to carry out such actions and movements which neither the self has any interest in, nor the intellect can fathom. For example, pelting the Jamarāt and walking repeatedly between Safā and Marwah. Actions of this nature display perfect servitude and the highest level of self-obliteration.

Zakāh is an exercise in compassion and fellow-feeling which can be easily understood, and the intellect too accepts. Fasting is prescribed for the controlling of the self and the curtailment of carnal desires which Shayṭān exploits for his own purposes. Reducing other engagements [such as food and drink] so that man can devote himself to other acts of worship is clearly visible in fasting. Ṣalāh contains the bowing and prostrating postures, and other movements through which the spirit of humility is created. Allāh's greatness and man's powerlessness are manifested. The hearts experience a special attachment to all this.

On the other hand, human nature is not inclined to pelting of the Jamarāt, sa'īy and other similar acts from which the heart acquires no joy or satisfaction and whose meanings and mysteries the intellect is unable to fathom. Thus, these acts are carried out solely through the spirit of obedience. Man understands that this is Allāh's order which has to be carried out in any event. Its objective is to deprive

the intellect of its authority, and to keep the self away from the things to which it may develop an attachment. This is because when the intellect understands something properly, the heart automatically becomes inclined to it. The inclination of the heart itself becomes a catalyst for that action. In such a situation, perfect servitude and total surrender no longer remain. This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said the following specifically on the occasion of hajj:

لَبَّيْكَ بِحُجَّةٍ حَقًّا تَعْبُدًا وَرِقًا

Here I am for the hajj with a true heart, and with a spirit of servitude and servility.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam did not use these words for any act of worship apart for hajj, not even for salāh.

The pilgrim – a true slave of orders

Hajj with all its pillars, actions, rites and devotions is the name for absolute obedience, total carrying out of orders, and submitting one’s self before every order. You will sometimes see the pilgrim in Makkah, then in Minā, ‘Arafāt and Muzdalifah. Sometimes he is moving, then you will see him pitching a tent, and at other times he will be removing it. He is thus a true slave of orders, and responds to every indication. He has no choice of his own, cannot make his own decisions, and is not free to make his own choices. He doesn’t settle down completely in Minā when he receives the order to proceed to ‘Arafāt, without the permission to stop in Muzdalifah. On reaching ‘Arafāt, he spends the entire day in prayer and worship. After sunset he feels like taking a small rest and spending the night

here, but he is ordered to go to Muzdalifah. He was strict in observing his ṣalāh throughout his life, but here in 'Arafāt he is asked to leave out the maghrib ṣalāh. He does this because he is a slave of Allāh *ta'ālā*, not of ṣalāh or of his habit. He performs this ṣalāh after reaching Muzdalifah and joins it with the 'ishā ṣalāh. He becomes attached to Muzdalifah and feels that he should remain here until he is fully satisfied. But he is not permitted to do this as well; he is ordered to turn and proceed to Minā.

This was the way of life of Hadrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* and all the Prophets, and after them, all the true friends and lovers of Allāh *ta'ālā* – sometimes they are on a journey, and at other times they are residing in one place. Sometimes they are in the company of others, at other times they are in solitude. They are neither slaves of habit nor imprisoned by their inclinations and wants. They neither obey their desires nor submit to their passions.

Attracting divine mercy

This was the most suitable and appropriate place for the hajj – the place where the leader of lovers, the imām of devotees, and the most beloved and closest servant of his time presented an astonishing story of devotion, love, loyalty, self-sacrifice and selflessness. It is the most brilliant and attractive story of pure love and selfless loyalty in the history of sincerity and devotion. All the Prophets, monotheists, devotees and genuine lovers of Allāh *ta'ālā* who came after him treaded in his footsteps in their respective times and eras. They imitated every single act of his, and repeated that same story of genuine loyalty. They performed the ṭawāf of the Ka'bah in the same

manner, the sa'īy between Safā and Marwah, stopped over at 'Arafāt, spent the night in Muzdalifah, pelted the Jamarāt, and sacrificed their animals at Minā.

In time and place; in this story which is repeated time and again; in those actions which are emulated; in those life-giving and soul-refreshing drafts from which the pilgrims are revitalized; in the enthusiasm and zeal in which they are perpetually immersed; in the companionship of various classes of the ummat whom they meet; in that religious and spiritual gathering whose example cannot be found anywhere else; in the Allāh's remembrance, supplications, talbiyah and seeking forgiveness which reverberate all the time and settle into the hearts – in all this, there still is that element which gives new life to dead hearts, encourages those who have lost courage, reinvigorates the broken souls, rekindles the spark of love which was on the verge of getting extinguished or had already extinguished, attracts divine mercy to itself, and creates a verve within it.

This grand assembly of Muslims and the supplications of the believers which have the ability to draw Allāh's mercy, and through which the most hard-hearted acquire a new life and zeal – these qualities have been highlighted by many Sufi scholars and 'ulamā'. Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* writes in this regard:

When the thoughts and aspirations are focused on one point, when the hearts are occupied beseeching [Allāh], when the hands are extended towards Him, and the eyes are raised towards the heavens, and everyone has become a single life and

heart which is hopeful of Allāh's mercy; then one should not think that Allāh *ta'ālā* will disappoint them, allow their efforts to go to waste, and deprive them of His mercy.¹

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes on the subject of hajj as follows:

The reality of hajj is that a large group of righteous people assemble in a specific time and remember the condition of those of the past whom Allāh *ta'ālā* favoured, such as the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. They assemble at a place where Allāh's signs are present, and where the imāms of Dīn and righteous of the ummat, cry out to and beseech Allāh *ta'ālā* out of respect for the symbols of Allāh *ta'ālā*, they seek His pardon, and are hopeful of their sins being atoned. When people assemble with such emotions, there is no delay in the descent of mercy and forgiveness. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said that Shayṭān is never so disgraced, humiliated and burning with anger as he is on the day of 'Arafah.

He writes elsewhere:

Purity of the self includes man going to and stopping over at those places where the righteous and the true friends of Allāh *ta'ālā* always went with genuine respect

¹ *Ihyā' al-'Ulūm*, vol. 1, p. 243.

of the heart and devotion, and filled those places with Allāh's remembrance. This will cause the angels and al-Mala' al-A'lā to turn their attention to these people, and when they stop over at these places, they will be dyed in the colour of the angels.

A refuge for mankind

Hajj, all the rites of this season, this annual gathering of the children of Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām, the mutual bond which exists between the spiritual children who look up to him with respect – all these are sufficient for the revival of those concepts, beliefs and objectives. It entails the existence of not only Muslims but of the entire humanity.

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَمًا لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ ط ذَلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ.

Allāh made the Ka'bah which is the sacred house a source of maintenance for the people, and the sacred months, and the sacrifice which is dedicated to the Ka'bah, and that which is strapped around its neck and taken to the Ka'bah. This is so that you know that surely Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and in the earth, and that Allāh is fully aware of everything.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 97.

An eternal centre for guidance, instruction, rectification and jihād

During the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam*, the Ka‘bah became a permanent centre of guidance, instruction, spirituality, devotion to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, a food for the soul, and a place of peace and tranquillity. Where the rites of ḥajj are fulfilled, the heart and soul receive food and strength. The cold heart is reheated and enlightened. It is as though its used up “cells” are replaced by new “cells”. The entire ummat acquires the religious message from here. The entire Muslim world assembles annually and pays its tribute of love, obedience and submission. It demonstrates its deep bond with this strong rope of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. The greatest scholars and ‘ulamā’, kings and rulers, rich and poor, politicians and leaders perform ṭawāf of this House with love and devotion. At the same time, with their insight, intelligence and consciousness; they practically prove that despite their differences they are united; despite their varieties, they are of the same hue and same thoughts; despite their conflicts, they are in one and the same row; despite their poverty, they are rich; and despite their weakness, they are strong. Although they are spread out throughout the world, immersed in their own issues and challenges of life, belong to different nations and tribes, are attached to various cultures and civilizations – they have all reached one central point, they meet each other and they become one. Their life is ṭawāf and sa‘īy, worship and sacrifice, īmān and belief; and the stations of their journey are Minā and ‘Arafāt, and the stations of ḥajj. They remain fully focused on their eventual destination. They are constantly moving and advancing, meeting new people,

introduced to new things and traversing new places. This journey within a journey continues until they leave this world and join their Master.

A display of Islamic and human brotherhood

Hajj is a victory for Islamic nationalism over all those national, racial, language and regional nationalisms to which many of the Muslim countries (due to several factors) have succumbed. Hajj is a manifestation and an announcement of Islamic nationalism. On reaching here, all Muslims cast aside their own national dresses by which they are recognized and to which many of them adhere fanatically, and don the national dress of Islam which in the definition of Islamic jurisprudence, hajj and 'umrah is known as the "iḥrām". They all chant the same hymn of humility, submission, need, dependence and supplication in one single language:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ.

I am here, O Allāh, I am here. I am here, You have no partner. I am here. All praises are due to You. All bounties are from You, and the kingdom belongs to You alone. You have no partner.

There is no distinction between the ruler and the ruled, the master and the servant, the rich and the poor, the old and the young. Their clothing and their chanting display Islamic nationalism. The same can be said of the other acts, devotions, rites, symbols and stations of hajj where the people of every country appear to be one and the same; and the distinctions of Arab and non-Arab, near and far are obliterated. They all run together between the

mountains of Safā and Marwah, they travel together to Minā, they proceed together to 'Arafāt, they present themselves together at Jabal ar-Rahmah for du'ā', and they all spend the night together in one place.

فَإِذَا أَفْضُتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَاذْكُرُوا كَمَا هَدَكُمُ ج
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الضَّالِّينَ.

Then when you return from 'Arafāt for the tawāf, remember Allāh at the Mash'arul Harām. Remember Him as He has taught you, surely you were ignorant prior to this.¹

They all return together, move together, and stop over together:

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ.

Then return for the tawāf from where all the people return, and ask forgiveness of Allāh, surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.²

Even in Minā they assemble together, and carry out the sacrificing of animals, shaving of the head and pelting of the Jamarāt together.

As long as hajj remains (Allāh willing it will remain until the day of Resurrection), these nationalisms and un-Islamic movements will not be able to swallow the Muslims. They cannot become their morsels, they can never succeed in making new "Ka'bahs" in their respective countries (to which they are naturally attached by virtue of their natural

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 198.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 199.

emotions and national fanaticism), which could replace the hajj and where all the Muslims could assemble. This qiblah will always remain one to which the people of the East and West, Arabs and non-Arabs turn altogether. This House of Allāh will always remain the same to which the Indian, Afghani, European and American Muslims will go to perform the hajj.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا ط وَآتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرٰهٖمَ مُصَلًّٔ.

*When We designated the Ka'bah a place of congregation for the people and a place of peace - and make the spot where Ibrāhīm stood, as a place of prayer.*¹

People from the furthest and most rugged corners of the earth will be drawn to this House and present themselves here. They will take vows for that day, count the days when they will be coming here, and consider the day when they reach here to be the realization of their greatest wish, and the happiest of occasions.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a most consoling theme which is a clear proof of Hadrat Maulānā's perfect imān and consciousness of Allāh *ta'ālā*. (compiler)

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in his *Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah* on the subject of hajj:

The origins of hajj is to be found in every nation. They all needed a place which – as symbols of Allāh *ta'ālā* – are blessed in their eyes because of the Islamic rites,

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 125.

actions and sacrifices which are attached to them. After all, through them their memories of Allāh's special servants and their special actions are revived.

The Ka'bah is the most eligible for this because Allāh's most glaring signs are to be found there. It was constructed by Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām who is the spiritual head of most nations. Acting under the order of Allāh ta'ālā, he built this first House for Allāh's worship and for the hajj in an uninhabited and deserted place. Now if there is anything apart from it, it will certainly include polytheism, innovations and fabrications – all of which have no basis.¹

If anyone compares the Islamic hajj with any other religion, he too will easily come to this conclusion, and this verse will be read by him:

لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَازِعُكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَاذْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ
هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ.

For every nation We appointed a way of worship which they observe. They should therefore not dispute with you in that matter and you should continue inviting [them] to your Sustainer. Surely you are on the straight path of perception.²

¹ *Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, vol. 1, p. 59.

² Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 67.

The reformative role of hajj

Like the previous three pillars [salāh, zakāh and fasting] of Islam, hajj also played its reformative and revivalist role. The pre-Islamic Arabs had introduced many ignorant practices, baseless customs and innovations in the hajj. These were clear distortions which caused immense damage to the benefits and objectives of hajj. The biggest cause of these distortions and additions was pagan pride, tribal vanity, the arrogance and discriminatory attitude of the Quraysh. The Qur'ān and the Islamic Sharī'ah put an end to these innovations and distortions. The root of each and every innovation was chopped off, and each trait and sign of ignorance was uprooted and replaced with something far better.

The Quraysh abstained from going to 'Arafāt with the other pilgrims. They would remain in the Haram. They claimed: "We are the people of Allāh and the custodians of Allāh's House." What they meant was that they enjoyed a distinguished position over others. They wanted to maintain this self-imagined position and distinction. Allāh *ta'ālā* put an end to this pagan and racial distinction and instructed them to do as the rest of the people do, and to go to 'Arafāt:

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ

*Then return for the tawāf from where all the people return.*¹

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* narrates from Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* that the Quraysh and

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 199.

other like-minded people used to stay over at Muzdalifah. They were known as Hums. All the other Arabs used to halt at 'Arafāt. With the arrival of Islam, Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam to go to 'Arafāt and stop over there. He must then return from there with everyone else. This is what is meant by the words:

مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ

...from where all the people return.

This is the explanation of Ibn Kathīr, Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, 'Atā', Qatādah, Suddī and other senior scholars. Ibn Jarīr is also of the same opinion and they are all unanimous in this regard.

Like the markets of 'Ukkāz, Dhū al-Majannah and Dhū al-Majāz, in pagan times the hajj season had been turned into a stage where each one boasted over the other, competed with each other and debated with one another. The pre-Islamic Arabs looked for every occasion where the tribes could assemble and engage in poetry sessions in which they would recall the achievements of their forefathers. The assembly at Minā was an excellent means for the satisfaction of this desire. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibited it and replaced it with something much better. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

*Once you have completed your rites of hajj, remember Allāh as you used to remember your forefathers. In fact, remember (Him) more than that.*¹

Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* narrates that the pagan Arabs used to boast over each other, how they used to bear the burdens of others, and fought on behalf of others. They spent all their time in describing the achievements of their forefathers. Allāh *ta’ālā* thus revealed the following verse:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

...remember Allāh as you used to remember your forefathers. In fact, remember (Him) more than that.

With the passage of time, hajj had lost much of its sanctity, purity and simplicity. It was reduced to a fair like the fairs of pagan times wherein every type of entertainment, play, fights and arguments took place. Allāh *ta’ālā* speaks against it in the Qur’ān and states:

فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

*Let there be no immoral talk, no sin, no quarrelling during the period of hajj.*²

Ibn Kathīr says that ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb related from Mālik who said: The words of Allāh *ta’ālā*: “no quarrelling during the period of hajj” refer to when the Quraysh used to halt near al-Mash’ar al-Harām in Muzdalifah where they used to fight and argue

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 200.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197.

with each other. One group would say: “We are right” while the other group would say: “We are right.” Or, “This is what we think, but Allāh knows best.”

Muḥammad ibn Ka'b *rahimahullāh* says: “When the Quraysh used to assemble in Minā, they used to say to each other: “Our hajj is more complete than yours.” The others would make similar claims.

Similarly, when the pagan Arabs used to make sacrifices for their idols, they used to place the meat before the idols and sprinkle the animal's blood on them. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا

*Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allāh.*¹

Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* relates that the pagan Arabs used to paste the blood of camels on the Ka'bah. When the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* saw this, they said to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*: “We have more right of doing this.” The following verse was revealed:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ

*Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allāh. Rather, it is the piety of your hearts that reaches Him.*²

One pagan custom was that once a person made the intention for hajj, he would not enter the house via its door. He considered it to be a major sin and synonymous to damaging one's hajj. As long as the

¹ Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 37.

² Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 37.

person was in a state of ihrām, he would climb the wall from the rear of his house and enter. Allāh *ta'ālā* rejected this practice and said that there is no good in it.

وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى ۚ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
أَبْوَابِهَا.

*It is no virtue that you enter the houses from their rear, but virtue is (of) that person who fears Allāh. Enter the houses through their doors.*¹

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* relates on the authority of Barrā' who said that when the pagans used to be in ihrām, they would enter their houses from the rear. Allāh *ta'ālā* revealed this verse:

وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى ۚ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
أَبْوَابِهَا.

*It is no virtue that you enter the houses from their rear, but virtue is (of) that person who fears Allāh. Enter the houses through their doors.*²

Abū Dāwūd and Tayālisī relate that when an Ansārī used to return from a journey, he would not enter his house from its door. The above verse was revealed in reference to this practice.

Another practice was that people considered it to be a sin to carry provisions for the hajj journey. They used to make a display of reliance [on Allāh] and say:

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 189.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 189.

“We are Allāh’s guests, so what is the need to carry provisions?” At the same time, they did not feel ashamed to go around begging for the fulfilment of their needs. On the contrary, they believed it to be a type of striving in Allāh’s path. Allāh *ta’ālā* prohibited this practice by saying:

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى

*And take provision for the journey, for surely the best provision for the journey is to abstain from begging.*¹

Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* relates on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* who said that some people used to leave their homes without carrying anything with them. They used to say: “We are performing the pilgrimage of Allāh’s House. Will Allāh not feed us?” Allāh *ta’ālā* revealed the above verse. In other words, you should certainly carry provisions so that you do not have to extend your hands to anyone.

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* relates from Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* who said that when the people of Yemen used to go for *hajj*, they abstained from carrying any provisions for the journey. They used to say: “We are from among those who place their trust in Allāh.” Subsequently, this verse was revealed:

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى

*And take provision for the journey, for surely the best provision for the journey is to abstain from begging.*¹

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197.

The pagans also considered it to be a sin to engage in trade and business during this season. In this way, they regarded a lawful act to be unlawful. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* narrates from Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* who said that ‘Ukkāz, Dhū al-Majannah and Dhū al-Majāz were famous markets of the pagan Arabs. However, trade was considered to be a crime in the hajj season. Allāh *ta’ālā* revealed the following verse:

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

*There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Sustainer.*²

Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* narrates from Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* who said that the pagan Arabs abstained from trade and business during the days of hajj. They used to say that these are the days of remembering Allāh *ta’ālā*. This verse was revealed in reference to this belief:

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

*There is no sin on you if you seek the bounty of your Sustainer.*³

A most evil practice among certain people was that of performing the ṭawāf of the Ka’bah while they were naked. They used to claim: “We cannot perform ṭawāf in the clothes in which we committed sins.”

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 198.

³ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 198.

This opened the door to immorality and was a purely pagan practice. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ

*O children of Ādam! Wear your garment at the time of every ṣalāh.*¹

Muslim and Nasa'ī relate from Ibn Jarīr who narrates from Ibn 'Abbās *radīyallāhu 'anhu* who said: “The pagans used to perform ṭawāf of the Ka'bah while they were naked. The men used to perform the ṭawāf during the day and the women at night. The women used to read this couplet:

اليوم يبدو بعضه أو كله – وما بدا منه فلا أحله

This verse was revealed in reference to this practice:

يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ

*O children of Ādam! Wear your garment at the time of every ṣalāh.*²

'Aufā relates from Ibn 'Abbās *radīyallāhu 'anhu* who said that the words “Wear your garment at the time of every ṣalāh” mean that some people used to perform ṭawāf of the Ka'bah while in a state of nakedness. Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed them to adorn themselves. The word *zīnah* is used for this purpose. It refers to a garment which covers those parts of the body which are supposed to be covered, and which also adorns the body.

¹ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 31.

² Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 31.

Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* writes that the same explanation to this verse is given by Mujāhid, 'Aṭā', Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī, Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, Qatādah, Suddī, Dahhāk, Mālik and Zuhri. They all concur that this verse was revealed with reference to those of the polytheists who used to perform ṭawāf of the Ka'bah while they were naked.

Together with the above verse, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam put a practical end to this practice. One year before the Farewell Pilgrimage, he sent Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhu to Makkah to announce that no one is to perform ṭawāf of the Ka'bah in a state of nakedness.

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* narrates from Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu who said that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam sent Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhu as the leader of the hajj one year before the Farewell Pilgrimage. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam advised him to announce on the day of sacrifice [the 10th of Dhū al-Hijjah] that after this year, no polytheist is to perform hajj, and no one is to perform ṭawāf of the Ka'bah while naked.

It was the belief of some pagan Arabs to abstain from walking between Safā and Marwah. Allāh *ta'ālā* revealed the following verse:

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا.

Surely Safā and Marwah are among the signs of Allāh. So whoever makes the hajj of the house of

Allāh or performs the 'umrah, there is no sin on him that he walks around them both.¹

Hadrat 'Urwah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radīyallāhu 'anhā* once asked him: What is the meaning of this verse:

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ج فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا.

Surely Safā and Marwah are among the signs of Allāh. So whoever makes the hajj of the house of Allāh or performs the 'umrah, there is no sin on him that he walks around them both.²

I replied: "It means that there is no sin on the person who walks between them." Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radīyallāhu 'anhā* said: "O my nephew! You are wrong. If it means what you said, then it ought to read like this:

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ لَا يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا

There is no sin on him if he does not walk around them.

This is how this verse was revealed: Before Islam, the Anṣār used to proclaim the greatness of Manāt which is near Muthallal. The one who proclaimed its greatness considered it bad to walk between Safā and Marwah. The Anṣār then asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* about it and said: "In pre-Islamic times we considered it bad to walk

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 158.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 158.

between Safā and Marwah.” This verse was then revealed:

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا.

*Surely Safā and Marwah are among the signs of Allāh. So whoever makes the hajj of the house of Allāh or performs the ‘umrah, there is no sin on him that he walks around them both.*¹

Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallāhu ‘anhā* says: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* then initiated the Sunnat of walking between these two mountains. Now no one can leave out this act.²

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* narrates from Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf who narrates from Sufyān who narrates from ‘Āsim ibn Sulaymān who said: “I asked Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* about Safā and Marwah. He replied: ‘We used to consider it to be from among the symbols of the days of ignorance. With the arrival of Islam, we discarded it because we thought it was a mark of the day of ignorance. This verse was then revealed.’”

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا.

Surely Safā and Marwah are among the signs of Allāh. So whoever makes the hajj of the house of

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 158.

² Bukhārī and Muslim.

*Allāh or performs the 'umrah, there is no sin on him that he walks around them both.*¹

Through far-sighted and important reformations the Shari'ah of Islam gave to this great pillar [of hajj] that original, genuine and pure form as it was from the days of Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām. It is a form which is pure from every type of distortion, adulteration and fabrication; and preserved in its original form.

Note: After reading these themes and writings, my heart desires to quote this couplet:

I am concealed in my speech as the
perfume is concealed in the petals of the
flower. Anyone who is inclined to see me
can see me in my speech.

After reading these extracts from *The Four Pillars of Islam*, the reader will most certainly perceive some of the knowledge, sciences, spiritual qualities and capabilities of Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh. After reading extracts from his other writings and rare statements, one will certainly recognize his Islamic sentiments, and the intense internal pain which he experienced at the retrogressed religious and worldly condition of Muslims.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with Hadrat Maulānā's rahimahullāh external sciences and etiquette, honour us with his spiritual conditions; and enable us to proliferate his thoughts and views. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 158.

Jumādā al-Ūlā 1425 A.H.
Waṣīyābād, Allāhābād.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* translation of this book was completed on 15 Muḥarram 1439 A.H./06 October 2017. We pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this humble effort and to make it a source of our salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām

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